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CHAPTER III

Family Labor

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AT crucial points in the annual round we have sketched out, the whole family lends its labor. Particularly at the turf making, the hay saving, and the potato planting, all members work together in bog, garden, or meadow. Though tasks vary according to age, sex, and relative status, the group works in a unison of effort in which a definite rhythm can be observed. Under the direction of the father, the husband and farm-owner, the variously divided tasks are correlated to the end in view. The periods of common effort in which all the family members, even to the children, are working in unison are also those in which the greatest speed is needed. At such times the pattern of daily household activity suffers; the regularities belonging to it are transferred to the field. Tea and bread, and perhaps sometimes heavier fare, make their appearance at the regular times, no longer within the house but on the edge of bog or meadow.

Within this concerted effort, a division of labor between the sexes and upon the basis of age appears. The division, however, is not confined entirely to farm work. It covers the whole field of the behavior of the individual. It divides obligations, duties, sentiments, and values of the group, and is enforced by the group. It pertains both among the members of the family groups and in the community at large. It controls individual action and attitudes and gives a standard

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of comparison between one's own farm work and that of one's fellows. The interests and the desires of the individual concur in large measure with the norm, and he finds reward and pleasure in it. He can rely upon similar obligations and duties toward himself on the part of others.

The greatest scope and variation in activity which we have seen to fall to the lot of the male takes its form in part from his relationship to the others of the household. On the normal farm there is an adult male farmer who is husband, father, and owner of the farm. Within the group he has the controlling role, subject to conventional restrictions of his authority. In farm work, as we have seen, he directs the activity of the family as it works in concert. In his special province he looks after and cares for the cattle, has full control over them, and takes complete charge of buying and selling them. He disposes of the income they bring in. But all this he is obliged to do in the interests of his wife and children. Should he fail to get a good price or prove a bad judge of cattle or handle them badly, his wife and children are entitled to a just anger against him.

As we have seen, all the work requiring heavy effort in garden and field falls to his lot. He makes and tends the drains, fences, barns, and shelters, which protect both cattle and garden produce. He works the fields and gardens with plough, mower, harrow, and spade. All the agricultural implements and the heavy work involved in their use and in the use of the horse are his province.

The produce which such work assures is his to be disposed of, as is all income derived from it. He may order it as he sees fit; yet his first charge is to the family he heads. The division of income between household needs and the demands of farm and livestock springs from his decisions; yet it is a matter of nice adjustment between himself and his wife in favor of the group as a whole. Custom and his own desire demand that he provide for his household to

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593 462 the best of his ability. Though he can make what disposal he will of the funds earned by the labor of the group, his wife and children can expect as of right that he shall make it for the family as a whole in which each member receives his share. For the work of his wife is complementary to his, and in its own sphere of as great importance to the livelihood and the organization of the family unit. While he may demand and expect of his wife that she fulfill her household duties, so may she demand and expect that he fulfill his in the management and working of the farm and in providing for herself and the children.

593 As regards income, all money derived from the sale of eggs and butter, the chief concern of the women beyond the house itself, belongs to her to dispose of as she sees fit. Yet the fruits of her labors are also subject to the needs of the family unit, husband and children.

462 593 The division of labor between the sexes arises within a field of larger interests and obligations. It is part of the behavior expected reciprocally of husband and wife. It is a functional element of their relationship within the family.

868 The training each sex receives from childhood in farm work reflects this fact. Each learns his or her part in farm economy, not as a vocational preparation but as a making ready for marriage. The boy acquires his man's skills and techniques for the farm and farm family he may head himself some day; the girl learns the woman's role as an integral part of her future state of wife and mother. Each learns to expect of the other not only the loving consideration of husband or wife but the proper skills in farm economy.

462 626 183 Among the small farmers this dichotomy of tasks assigned to the sexes in the economy of the farm family is more even than the reciprocal duties of husband and wife, father and mother. It is also an integral part of the personalities of all men and women of the peasant's own kind. One can get many expressions of attitude of this sort. They show that

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241 462 626 183 461 limits of the restriction. Thus on several occasions the authors have heard men admonish a woman for interruption with such phrases as: "Woman, be silent while we [men] are talking about ploughing." Ridicule and laughter greet suggestions that either sex busy itself with the work of the other, though in the case of a woman doing a man's work some of the praise bestowed upon surprising successes meets her if she does it well. There is also an entire body of popular belief and superstition surrounding the dichotomy in farm labor.

462 593 183 626 These beliefs and attitudes serve to uphold the conventional division and to evaluate the necessary behavioral specialization which is basic to the interrelationships within the farm family. The connection between family status and labor performed brings about an identification between them. Ridicule and graver charges of unmanliness and unwomanliness can be brought to reaffirm the conventions against the offender in either sphere. Just as in the noneconomic life of the family, behavior is enjoined upon members on the basis of sex, so, when the group acts in economic enterprise, different but complementary roles become conventional for each sex. The interesting point is the identification. For the farm family, farm work is as much a family matter as is sharing the same table.

462 593 561 Within the framework of the division of labor on the basis of sex, there is another just as great division on the basis of age differences. Though all the males of the farm family share the work which is regarded as the masculine province, there can be immediately observed great differences in the practice of the masculine technique by the male family members; the same can be observed in the feminine province.

These further divisions of tasks likewise reflect family status. They are part of the behavior expected of the farmer as a family member, and take their form in the complex of

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his relationship to his fellows within the group. The controls exercised among members in work and in the life of the family in general show themselves a constant pattern to be observed from farm to farm wherever one elects to examine the daily and annual rounds of activity.

Thus in any of the tasks which the group must perform in its economy, the division of labor between the adult farmer-father and his sons may be observed. The father is owner and director of the enterprise; in him the farm and its income are vested; in the community it is known as his and the sons are spoken of as his "boys." Thus in the draining of a field or the sale of cattle in a fair, the sons, even though fully adult, work under their father's eye and refer necessary decisions to him.

Perhaps the best method of illustrating this relationship is to present it from the point of view of the growing individual who takes his place in the farm family. He forms part of the productive unit which is his own family. The techniques of farming are passed on to him, and he learns them under the direction of his father, uncles, and brothers. At their hands he acquires the conditioning which will fit him to form a farm family of his own, thus to continue the traditional pattern. Naturally, his conditioning is more than merely technological; he gets on the farm the full training which makes him a member of his class and time.

The growing child ordinarily sees his father as owner and principal worker of the farm. When the whole family group of father, mother, children, and whatever other relatives may be living with them, works in concert, as at the potato planting, the turf cutting, and the haymaking, it is the father who directs the group's activities, himself doing the heavy tasks. The father looks after and takes care of the cattle, delegating minor tasks connected with them to his sons. Even though the cattle may be generally discussed by

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462 561 593 868 the household, he has full control of them, disposes of them, drives them to the fair, handles and uses the money got for them. If he fails to get a good price, handles the beasts badly, or proves himself a bad judge of them, the criticism of his wife and neighbors soon establishes the value of careful husbandry in the son's mind.

462 593 868 The father does all the constant heavy work necessary to keep the land in condition in so rainy and treeless a country. He makes drains, ditches, fences, walls, shelters, and barns, as we have seen. As the son grows older, he learns to help at these tasks, finally taking them over. The father prepares the garden, ploughs, plants, and harrows, does all the spade work of cultivation and everything involving the use of horses and agricultural implements. The son soon learns that these are men's tasks, and he gradually assumes his share of them. The adult men of the neighborhood rival one another at these tasks; they chafe and boast back and forth over their prowess. The son cannot fail to hear and value the techniques which he acquires.

462 593 868 626 He learns those techniques in a narrow school. Where tradition is still so strong and the incursions of trained agriculturalists still relatively infrequent, as among the small farmers, there is little variation from the tried and true way. Each operation and each tool demand a technique of their own. The father makes sure that the son learns it well. Command, rivalry, ridicule, and many an adage and bit of folklore all conspire to the same result.

The father must make sure that the son has learned the right and traditional technique. For he must be ready to stand his ground with anyone in the community in farm skills. Every operation becomes the intimate concern of his neighbors; a man must hold his head high. More important, [461] many skills are plied in coöperative activities, in turf cutting, haymaking, and much of the work of the garden. In such cases, a definite rhythm is necessary for greater effec-

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tiveness among the coöperating workers, and any deviation from the accepted technique destroys such unison. This, too, the son learns at his father's hands.

At home the son learns that building and repairing the houses, sheds, and other structures of the farm is men's work and that the duty of performing it devolves on the father. He watches his father buy and use all the feeding stuffs needed for farm animals and learns something of the nice adjustment which must be made between the expenditures of this kind and those demanded by the women of the household for food, clothing, and household needs. He finds himself included in the family deliberations which impress upon him the economic interdependence of the family and the division of labor between men and women.

The process is a gradual one. It is an integral part of daily experience protracted over many years. In his earliest childhood, of course, the mother looms larger in the child's consciousness than the father. The child's first duties, as soon as he can speak and walk, are to run on petty errands to neighbors and near-by "friends." Soon he is taking his father's meals to him in the fields or going on errands to the nearest shop. Until he is seven and has gone through First Communion, his place is in the house with the women, and his labor is of very little importance. After First Communion, at six or seven, he begins to be thrown more with his elder brothers, and comes to do small chores which bring him more and more into contact with his father and with the other men of the neighborhood. By the time he is ten or eleven he will be brought home from school, if needed, to take his part in the important agricultural work of the year, particularly at spring sowing and hay harvest. But not till he passes Confirmation and leaves school (generally at the same time) does he take on full men's work. Even then, as he becomes adult and takes on more and more of the heavy tasks of the farm work, he never escapes his father's

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direction until his father dies or makes over the farm to him at his marriage.

If economic apprenticeship is also a process of conditioning within the family, so likewise the direction of economic enterprise coincides with the dominant and controlling role of the parent within the family. The son is subordinated in both spheres to his parents, particularly the father. Rather, the spheres are one.

For the child grows up within the full complex of life within the family. The petty errands which constitute his first steps in farm work are a mere incident in the conditioning he receives and the relationships he builds up with his fellows. He develops the sentiments of affection and dependence upon his mother and the other family members in those years in the care and attention he receives at their hands. He learns the code of conduct which constitutes the folkways of his group and the reciprocal relations within his family in a gradual process of training over years. This conduct ranges from the errands he runs for family members superordinate to him, to the learning of his prayers and the development of the sentiments which make of sexual behavior of any kind an offense and of that within the family, incest.

Thus the same landmark in his life which marks his beginning to do the minor chores of farm work after six or seven marks a change of his life within the household, for thereafter he sleeps with his brothers and the separation which begins to take him from his sisters in work and play now separates them within the household.

Later his sharing of chores with his brothers in farm work is again merely incidental to his long years of life with them. By the same token the commanding position which the father (and the mother) exercise over him in farm work is but one aspect of their control. We shall have occasion to see in a later section how this dominance expresses

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itself in household arrangement and in the grouping of individuals in other spheres than farm work.

This parental dominance continues as long as the father lives. Even though the major work of the farm devolves upon the sons, they have no control of the direction of farm activities nor of the disposal of farm income. They go to market and fair from the time they are twelve years old, but they buy or sell little, if anything, for themselves. Thus the small farmer and his sons are often seen at the fairs and markets together, but it is the farmer-father who does the bargaining. Once when one of the authors asked a countryman about this at a potato market, he explained that he could not leave his post for long because his full-grown son "isn't well known yet and isn't a good hand at selling." If the son wants a half crown to go to a hurley match or to take a drink on market day with friends, he must get it from his father. The authors have seen many sons, fully adult, come into shops to buy some farm requirement, such as a bag of meal, and say that the "old fellow" will pay for it. And a few days later the old fellow arrives to pay for the goods "my young fellow got." The son may, of course, earn money in employment off the farm, as many do at work on the roads in occasional employment with governmental bodies or large farmers. But in this case he is expected to contribute the larger part of the money to the general household expenses as long as he remains on the farm.

The procedure of the Land Commission, a government body, in providing additions to small holdings from the break-up of large estates illustrates well this retention of parental authority. It is the policy of the Commission to employ local men as much as possible in the reclamation and fencing work necessary at the division of an estate; the owners of the holdings to be enlarged are entitled to the work. Consequently, when the work is given, the farmer owners are assigned it. But it is the sons who do the work,

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593 561 and at the pay-off the "old fellows" walk sometimes many miles to be paid the wages their sons have earned. In one case of land division which the authors witnessed, a Land Commission official walked about the estate pointing out the plots which the selected farmers were to get. The farmers followed in a body at a respectful distance, each ready to step forward when his name was called. Behind them came all the young men of the neighborhood, the farmers' sons. When it was necessary to send someone back to a farmhouse or to cut up stakes to mark boundaries, the orders were transmitted from the official to the farmer and from the farmer to his sons, though these were in the majority of cases adult men. Likewise in country post offices, even after the farm has been made over to the son and the "old people" have the old-age pension, it is the son who comes to collect it for them.

Even at forty-five and fifty, if the old couple have not yet made over the farm, the countryman remains a "boy" in respect to farm work and in the rural vocabulary. A deputy to the *Dáil* (the Irish parliament) raised a considerable laugh in 1933, which echoed into the daily newspapers, when he inadvertently dropped into the country idiom and pleaded for special treatment in land division for "boys of forty-five and older" who have nothing in prospect but to wait for their fathers' farms. Likewise, a countryman, complaining to one of the authors about his position, said: "You can be a boy here forever as long as the old fellow is still alive."

593 561 861 It goes without saying that the father exercises his control over the whole activity of the "boy." It is by no means confined to their work together. Indeed, the father is the court of last resort, which dispenses punishment for deviations from the norm of conduct in all spheres. Within the bounds of custom and law he has full power to exercise discipline. Corporal punishment is not a thing of the past in

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Ireland, and, especially in the intermediate stages of the child's development, from seven to puberty, it gets full play.

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It is during those years that the characteristic relationship between father and son is developed in rural communities. The son has suffered a remove from the previous almost exclusive control of its mother, in which an affective content of sympathy and indulgence was predominant, and is brought into contact for the first time with the father and older men. But the transfer is not completed. There is a hiatus in his development through the years of school when his participation in men's work and his relationship with his father has little chance of developing into an effective partnership. A real union of interests does not take place until after Confirmation and school-leaving, when for the first time his exclusive contacts and his entire day-to-day activity, particularly in farm work, will be with his father and the older men.

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This fact colors greatly the relationship of father and son, as far as affective content goes. There is none of the close companionship and intimate sympathy which characterizes, at least ideally, the relationship in other groups. Where such exists, it is a matter for surprised comment to the small farmers. In its place there is developed, necessarily perhaps, a marked respect, expressing itself in the tabooing of many actions, such as smoking, drinking, and physical contact of any sort, which can be readily observed in any small farm family. Coupled with this is the lifelong subordination the retention of the name "boy" implies, which is never relaxed even in the one sphere in which farmer father and son can develop an intense community of interest — farm work. Nothing prevents the development of great mutual pride, the boy in his experienced and skillful mentor, tutor, and captain in work, and the man in a worthy and skillful successor and fellow workman, but on the other hand everything within the behavior developed in the rela-

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tionship militates against the growth of close mutual sympathy. As a result, the antagonisms inherent in such a situation often break through very strongly when conflicts arise.

The division of labor in the masculine sphere between father and sons, then, is more than an arrangement in farm management. It is very directly part of the systems of controls, duties, and sentiments which make up the whole family life. The apprenticeship and the long subordination of the sons in farm work are reflections of the entirety of their relationship to parents; it is impossible to treat the two spheres of behavior separately.

Similarly, the relationships in farm work between the other members of the household cannot be treated separately.

On the other hand, the relationship of mother and son has a very different content. Like that between father and son, it is the product of years of development. It is marked, too, by a similar retention of subordinate status on the part of the son. In farm work the boy is subject to commands of his mother even when, fully adult, he has passed over exclusively to men's work. It is for this reason that many Irish farm widows with grown sons can successfully manage a farm for many years before they ultimately make it over upon a son's marriage, and from their restricted scope within the household and haggard effectively direct operations in the masculine sphere. In such cases, the woman retains control. Even in such an important matter as her son's eventual marriage she has a very dominant voice.

But within the scope of such a subordination there is a quite different affective history. The relationship is the first and earliest into which a child enters. It is very close, intimate, and all-embracing for the first years of life; only gradually does the experience of the child expand to include brothers, sisters, and, last, the older male members of the household.

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Until seven, the child of either sex is the constant companion of its mother. If the family is numerous an elder child, usually a sister, may take over much of the mother's role, but the mother is always near-by. As the woman works in the house or fields, the child is kept by her side. In the house it usually sits in a crib by the fire or plays about on the floor, but always within sight and sound. It learns its speech from its mother, amid a flood of constant endearments, admonitions, and encouragements. The woman's work never separates her from the child. Custom imposes no restraints or interruptions in her solicitude. She looks after its comforts, gives it food, dresses it, etc. She constantly exercises restraints and controls over it, teaching it day by day in a thousand situations the elements of prudery, modesty, and good conduct.

The controls she exercises are of a different kind from those of the father. She is both guide and companion. Her authority most often makes itself felt through praise, persuasion, and endearment. Only when a grave breach of discipline demands a restraining power greater than hers, or when an appeal to ultimate authority is needed, does the father begin to play his role. Especially in the years before puberty, the farm father enters the child's cognizance as a disciplinary force. The barriers of authority, respect, extra-household interests, and the imperatives of duty rather than of encouragement make it difficult for any intimacy to develop.

Even after Confirmation the child's relationship to his mother is not materially weakened. He becomes confirmed, it is true, in a masculine scorn for feminine interests and pursuits, but he can and must still look for protection to his mother against a too-arbitrary exercise of his father's power. In family disputes the mother takes a diplomatic, conciliatory role. From her intermediary position she can call upon the strongest ties between herself and her sons

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● 593 to restore rifts in parental authority and filial submission.

Throughout the years of the son's full activity in the farm economy under the father's headship, the mother still remains the source of comfort and the preparer of food and is still infinitely solicitous of his welfare. It is only at marriage that the bond is broken and undergoes material transformation. If the child must leave the farm for other walks of life, the closest possible relationship is still maintained. When one goes home, it is to see one's mother. There is always an attempt to carry on a correspondence. In exile, the bond lingers as a profound sentimental nostalgia.

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CHAPTER IV

The Relations of Kindred

THE relations of the members of the farm family are best described in terms of the patterns which uniformity of habit and association build up. They are built up within the life of the farm household and its daily and yearly work. The relations of the fathers to sons and mothers to sons fall repeatedly into regular and expectable patterns of this kind that differ very little from farm to farm. 593

If we are to understand them, then, we must trace them out of this setting and see in what manner they offer us explanation of Irish rural behavior. In terms of a formal sociology, such as Simmel might give us, the position of the parents is one of extreme superordination, that of the children of extreme subordination. The retention of the names "boy" and "girl" reflects the latter position. Sociological adulthood has little to do with physiological adulthood. Age brings little change of modes of address and ways of treating and regarding one another in the relationships within the farm family. The relative positions of the parties must be stated in terms of the events taking place between them. These events run over the years and redefine relationships in their course. This kind of development characterizes and gives form to the family relations we have already detailed. We shall see now that it gives form to all of them and to the farm family itself.

The long years of intimate association in the act and

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593 events of a common life build up very complete adaptations and very close emotional bonds among all those who share the life together. The bonds must be compatible; adjustment is made all round, again through gradual habituation. Otherwise conflict is ready to set off young against old, men against women, persons against one another. There is reciprocity of obligation and expectancy.

But the point of interest here is that it is the bonds that must be dealt with for understanding, not anything within them or the activities associated with them. Here there is an absolute coincidence of "social" and "economic" factors within single relationships. In the case of a small farmer and his son, there is only one relationship; to separate their social from their economic activities is meaningless. They are one in fact, and, as far as the peasants are concerned, they are one in name.

593 554 Thus any of the words designating status in the relationship, such as father, son, owner, employee, heir, etc., might well be used, but in actual practice the first two of them are sufficient to cover all the activities of the relationship. Only the statuses of father and son are distinguished by the country people. These words are the only designations of status that are to be heard among them. All others are unnecessary. They are not part of the experience of the small farmers except as they become so when the outside world breaks in. Consequently, terms designating status are not to be understood or interpreted on a basis of *a priori* or philological meaning, but as references to the events in connection with which they were used.

593 Thus when it comes to understanding the force of such terms for the small farmers who use them, we are able to see why it is that the terms are emotional symbols of very great power. They are part of the peasant's own experience in the very relations we have been discussing, and they make definite and reinforce the relations for him. They cannot

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be divorced from the patterns of relationships which they symbolize, and their role cannot be understood except in the fact. 593

If then we turn back to the common life of the families of the small farmers, it is these very terms which give us the clue to the relationships which that life builds up.

In the Irish family, the sons and the daughters are equally subordinate; there is no formal distinction made between them. The kinship terms of both the English and the Irish languages reflect this equivalence of siblings. In either case, one term, son or *mac*, reflects the unity of the position of all male children, the procreated generation, from the point of view of the elder or procreant pair, the mother and father. Similarly, a single term in both languages, brother and *dearbhráthair*, expresses for the siblings their common occupancy of that position. Rural Ireland knows neither primogeniture nor junior right. Except as age differences separate them informally, the brothers occupy the same status both within and outside the family group. Thus neighbors and other outsiders refer to them all alike as "the boys" of the farmer's family. 593 601

Accordingly, their equality reflects itself in farm activity. All are on an equal footing there. The brothers are all alike under the father's direction and control as long as they remain on the farm. They work together, and the years of common effort and common dependence create a strong solidarity between them. Though only one of them may ordinarily expect to inherit land and cattle, the others renounce their rights as it were in the interests of the identification of the family group with the land they work. The bloody faction fights which used to disfigure Irish country life have practically passed away, but the forces which brought them into existence still continue. Many a country fight involving a dispute over rights of way and water courses brings in the adherents of all the brothers of either 593 628 [428]

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593 628 house, and, though the cases nowadays find their way into the courts, a very common defense is that the feud is very long-standing and that "the two grandfathers" began it. The tales written in the last century by William Carleton, who wrote of a life he himself knew intimately, describe faction fights in which whole parishes became involved, but the center of disturbance was invariably a family dispute in which the brothers of a family ranged with their friends against those of another. So fierce is the solidarity which the identification of brothers and their land calls forth that even today in Clare the name "defending Tim Flanagan's title" is jocularly given to forcible resistance to eviction, after a famous stalwart of the last century whose ten sons fought valiantly for their father's farm.

593 589 In fact, this emotional attachment is strong enough sometimes to preclude the breaking up of the family. Two instances of this sort came under the authors' special notice out of the many which occur. It is difficult to get the exact figures, since census materials deal only with the marital status of farm owners, but many of the bachelor-owned farms of Clare may be of this type. In the first case, two brothers and four sisters occupied a small holding of twenty-three acres and a four-room house for over fifty years. Several of them at various times had tried to break away; in fact, two brothers did, but the ones who stayed gave as their reason first that they hadn't wanted to leave the old people and afterwards that none of them had wanted "to be the first to leave." The second case was very similar. Two brothers and a sister had stayed on to work a small farm for their old parents, but, when the old couple died, none of them wanted to leave and each felt too old for marriage.

593 428 Whatever differences make a rift in this fraternal front are matters more of preparation for leaving the farm family than of internal differentiation in status and behavior. On most small farms only one son can be kept at home as suc-

cessor to land and chattels. The family property, house, stock, and land, descend to him intact. The other sons must be provided for elsewhere.

In choosing the son to remain upon the farm, the father has full power of decision. His interest lies in choosing among his sons the one he thinks will carry on most successfully. There is no rule or norm in the matter; and the brothers are united in expecting an adequate return for their years of service. But none of them may claim more than the other, and they are all dependent upon the father's sense of their fair deserts. In many cases there may be an early difference among them in the inclinations they show in adolescence. But the special position a brother occupies in this regard is a matter of agreement among them all and easy enough of adjustment.

Turning now to the other relationships neither fraternal nor parental within the family, it is obvious that those among the females and between females and males build up in the same way as the ones we have already discussed.

The family makes a formal distinction between the female members and their male fellow members in terminology, just as it builds a dichotomy of behavior upon the sexual difference. Thus in the procreated generation daughter and sister, *inghean* and *deirbhshiúr*, correspond to son and brother; for the daughters occupy equivalent positions in a common subordination to the parents.

These terms express merely a classification of the female individuals and their positions in the complex of reciprocal relationships between family members. What has been said of the conditioning of the boy can be repeated of the girl, with, of course, a difference in the techniques acquired. And no less than in the boy's case, farm work is merely a part of the total adaptation the girl makes toward her fellows and toward the environment in which they live.

The work of the women is as important in farm economy

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593 861 as the men's. The coincidence between family status and economic role holds for them as well. Women's work on the small farm is complementary to that of the men, as we have seen, though, of course, it is quite distinct. The young girl growing up on the small farm learns this, just as the young man acquires the masculine techniques. The girl is thrown constantly with the mother and the older women of the household. After she is seven, her pursuits differ completely from those of her brother and, except as she is in very close constant association within the household, she has no working contact with her father.

857 868 Many minor tasks fall to the girl as she grows up, particularly driving and milking the cows. Her conditioning prepares her to fill the role her mother occupies in the household. All the interior of the house, the immediate vicinity of courts and haggard where the fuel is stacked, the well, the poultry yard and sheds, are her concern. She learns to milk cows, feed the pig, tend the chickens, and look after all the young animals through helping the older women. She learns the lore of disposing of eggs, butter, and occasionally of some of the vegetable produce of the garden, potatoes and cabbage, and occasionally goes to market with her mother.

In the chief business of the women, the house itself, the preparation and serving of food and the repair and upkeep of clothing, she serves a never-ending daily apprenticeship. A young girl may often be delegated to look after the hearth, make and keep the fires going, etc. Only the mother makes small purchases of food and household goods. Only the mother bakes the great variety of breads. But by the time she leaves school, the girl may be proficient in these tasks too. So also with the butter making. Income derived from this and from poultry belongs to the older woman; the girl has no share until she herself has married.

000 In the past century (and in isolated regions still) most of

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In the past century (and in isolated regions still) most of the clothing of the small farmers was made at home by the women. Now, however, it is nearly all shop-bought. Certain vestiges of the former practice remain, however, in knitting sweaters, gloves, socks, and scarfs; and in the country districts, at least of West and North Clare, there is a custom which demands that some woman of the house be always at work. If there is no other task on hand, they must occupy themselves with knitting. In former days, the daughters of the community might gather in a *meitheal*, or coöperative work group, under the supervision of older women for carding and spinning flax and wool. In any event, the younger woman, the girl, is at the older woman's command.

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Much the same content of emotion and sentiment exists in this relationship, subordinate as the daughter must remain, as in the case of the boy. But in the case of the daughter there is never a readjustment, and there is never a period of community of interest with the father. Nor need the mother fear a competition with an impatient oncoming successor as must the farm father who knows he cannot put off forever his relinquishing his farm to his son. For, eagerly as the daughter may look forward to her own marriage, she knows that marriage will bring in a rivalry over household control with a totally new person in an entirely new scene. It is her husband's mother, not her own, to whom new adjustments must be made. The implication of this fact, and the struggle it entails, will bear examination in the discussion of marriage.

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Still another relationship exists within the household under normal circumstances. The relationship of brother to sister has its reflection in farm work. But it is a relationship with a different history from the relationship between siblings of similar sex. Sexual differences in behavior have made a different habit, beginning very early in the child's experience. And, for each of them, the sexual differences are colored a great deal by the norms which mark the rela-

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tionship of their parents. Thus there is a good deal of the boy's regard for his mother in his attitude toward his sister. Likewise for the sister, especially in the years when both are fully adult, the brother comes to have much of the position of the father, especially if he is older. He shares the masculine ultimate control of farm and household. If she remains on the farm after her brother's marriage, she must look to him for her dowry.

The country people have a good deal to say about the strength of this bond. Deep-rooted in the years of common subordination and common association, it survives the removal of the sister to another house and farm. It means much visiting and a close relationship with the coming children. The country people marvel that a young child may often like its mother's brother better than its "own uncles." They mean thereby that the bond survives in equal strength with that where the common patrilineal interests of a common family name are in question, as in the case of two brothers and their children.

That the complete family is the complete unit of life both social and economic to the small farmer is admirably illustrated by the incomplete families of the countryside. By the term "incomplete" the authors indicate those many small farms which are worked by spinsters, bachelors, widowers, and widows.

In such farms, control is exercised by the person owning the farm. A widow is usually helped out by a male relative, brother, nephew, or son. Here again the male devotes himself to the tasks which in ordinary circumstances would fall to the father in a full family unit. The control over expenditure and the disposal of farm goods rests, however, with the woman. But even then the bargaining in such typically masculine enterprises as the cattle fair would be delegated by her to her helping relative. In one instance which came to the authors' notice a young widow called

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CHAPTER V

The Kinship System

THE mothers and fathers who order farm life are themselves sons and daughters. They have or have had (before their creation of a family of their own upon the farm) much the same relationships with their parents as their children have with them. Indeed in many cases households comprise three generations. Grandfathers and grandmothers of the children live in the house. Family structure is not confined to the immediate present family group, but descends with each generation as the boys and girls reach social maturity at marriage and the creation of their own families.

This descent forms the basis of any kinship system; it provides also the basis upon which the "friends" to whom one has obligations in rural Ireland are reckoned. The individuals comprised within the system are so because of their sharing of that descent in common. These are one's "people" or "friends," in the countryman's vocabulary.

The terms express the generic category into which the kindred fall. Both terms are, in a sense, translations of Gaelic idiom. The first, people, corresponds exactly with the Irish *muinntear*. The second in ordinary rural usage refers not to a comrade, as in English, but to one's relatives. Even in the towns, one's father, mother, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, are referred to as "immediate friends." In the countryside one speaks of one's kinsmen as one's

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601 "friends," particularly if they occupy one's own generation;
612 one's father's relatives, even his brothers, become "my father's friends." A "distant friend" refers not to distance in space but to that in cousinship.

612 Before we detail the individuals included within this
593 category, let us make two points clear. The first of these is directly associated with the dominance of the father within the family. He comes, as it were, to stand for the group which he heads; the farm is known by his name, and
[591] wife and children bear his name likewise. For the Irish family is patrilocal and patronymic, to use the technical
[611] terms. Farm, house, and most of the household goods descend from father to son with the patronym; we shall follow their general movement in a later section.

611 This patrilineal descent gives a certain accent upon the
612 kinship system; it chooses one line of descent out of the many possible and gives those who make it up a common name. There is a reflection of this fact in the groupings of Irish rural life. To outsiders a person may be known as "a boy of the Shannons" or a "man of the Flaherties," but in a sense these groupings are merely linguistic conveniences. For in many cases two families of Shannons may live side by side, yet not be considered "friends." None of the obligations of kinship bind them. For in the phrase of the countryman: "They are not the same Shannons or, if they are, they are too far out."

Our examination of the various ways of reckoning kinship will make the statement clear. Patriliny is merely one device, an extension of the father-son relationship, by which individuals are included in one's group of "friends."

593 A second observation upon the kinship system springs
582 from the fact that the family relationships regulate sexual conduct. Indeed, our examination of farm agriculture leads us to see that the technological training of the individual goes hand in hand with the sexual. Marriage prohibitions,

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like the sanctions of the exercise of sexual rights in marriage, are part of and take their form in the family group. Consequently, in the wider and larger alignments of individuals springing from the family which make up the kinship system, similar prohibitions occur.

For the kindred are the group within which marriage is prohibited. In a sense the formulation of the individuals in it as a group is an abstraction. Kinship bonds come ready formed to the newborn human being. The child is soon brought to know and adopt requisite behavior and sentiments toward the individuals with whom the other persons of his family are reciprocally bound.

Thus the Irish child very early meets his mother's and father's brothers and sisters; he runs errands and receives small gifts from them; as soon as he is able he carries presents. In later years of boyhood he does odd jobs for them; his labor is lent at cooring; he takes his place with them at the family table or round the hearth on visiting. At various times of crisis in his career, such as First Communion, Confirmation, and marriage, he receives gifts from them which signalize the intimacy between him and them. They share his parent's superordination to him, for they belong to the same older generation as his parents.

He is very likely, too, to be thrown constantly with their children, especially if they are substantially of the same age, where his uncles and aunts remain within visiting distance. In country regions, such as Luogh, nearly all of the families are united by complicated, reduplicated bonds of marriage and descent. There the boys and girls grow up together in constant association, both as "friends" and companions. It is with them that the natural course of development creates bonds of sentiment and mutual aid, quite like those within the family, which take the form of that "friendliness" at once obligatory and pleasurable seen in the account of farm work.

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583 family is severe. We give the statement in detail in order
578 to show the general situation as he saw it. He is a townsman, and somewhat detached.

> The daughter on the farm has to wait till all the sons are got ready for their going off and maybe have been given their passage to America or money to set up in business or to settle on the land. But there are runaway matches all the time, they fall in love, they run off together, and they come in here and take work away from the laborers here. It takes a lot of love and courage because the son is usually cut off and the daughter leaves a very good place for nothing but a cabin and they get none of the money. Maybe after several years the girl will get her fortune, but not always. I remember Jerry N — whose father was very well off as farmers go, but he wouldn't marry the girl they picked for him and took up with a servant girl instead. He's driving a hackney now and lives in a cabin with a flock of children. Jimmy L — ran off but he gradually became reconciled with his people. The father had a good farm of sixty acres, and so had the girl, but the young fellow got nothing out of it. His father helps a little now, sending down a bag of potatoes.

602 Another case which the authors had under observation
593 from time to time illustrates not only the matchmaking
578 system but the general family setting in which marriage
627 takes place and farm life moves. Sanctions for conduct aggrieving the families are applied by the families themselves. The case is long but worth quoting in the words of the teller for its comprehensive character:

> There was a girl of the O'Rourkes from D —, they have a farm out there and she married a fellow named Murphy up in C —. She was a school teacher out in England for several years and she became great with this fellow the farmer, and she used to send him money over from England for when they would get married. She sent about two hundred pounds in all. She has an aunt up in C — married up there and it was all the fault of the aunt. She came home and she hadn't yet told her people anything about it. She was just about ready to get married to the fellow and she told them that she was going to get married. They agreed. Then she said she was going to get married to

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Murphy and they tried to argue her out of it, but she said it was too far gone now and she was committed to marry him, so they hastily gave her their blessing. He lived in a big house up by C— and had sixty acres.

Well, he was a sort of uncouth kind of chap, rough, and she was what you might say anglified, or citified. She wanted to brighten up the house and make it nice and hang up curtains and that sort of thing. He thought the reins of the horse would do for the curtains and so on, and it came to a fight between them, a clash of wills, and in the end, as it must, the stronger one won out; that is, the man's. She got hysterical and he cast round for ways of getting rid of her, and he sent up to Ennistymon for the doctor to come down and examine her to commit her to the asylum. He didn't send her up to C— though that was nearer and in his district, but he sent up for Dr. MacNulty to Ennistymon, leaving Dr. Starr in C— so as to get someone who wouldn't know the case.

The married sister of the wife was staying in the house at the time and he was driving her home. He told her the doctor was coming, and she said, "You are doing wrong," and made him turn round and go back to the house where Dr. MacNulty was examining the hysterical woman. Then the married sister got her brother and father to take her back to D—. They came up with Father Brendan of Ennis here and took her away down to D—. After a time they got up a party and invited him down for a reconciliation.

After a while she went back to live with him. He started it again and got her hysterical and called in another doctor, who said that there was nothing wrong with the woman.

One night the three brothers of the girl and her father came up to the house and one went round to the back door and the others went in the front and they caught the fellow. They were going to force him to sign receipts for the money the daughter gave him. Country people demand receipts for money they give and they are right, but the girl hadn't liked to ask and hadn't got any, so her people were going to step in and get them themselves. Murphy had rifled her belongings and torn off his name from all the receipts he had sent her to England. They came in and said that he was lucky he was going to escape with his life. No one in their family had ever been in the asylum and no one belonging to them had ever been insane or robbers.

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602 593 578 627 and that he was trying to black them with the disgrace of it. The girl ran in but they threw her out into the hall where her father caught her and held her. They said that all the people belonging to him were thieves, and that two of them, two uncles of his, his mother's brothers, were convicted for robbery and that all his people before him had been insane, and that he was trying to black the name of a good family. In the end they caught him and beat him till he consented to sign the receipts. They gave him a good hiding.

The teller drew his own conclusions from the case:

If the girl had listened to her parents, they would have told her all this and saved her. But she went on and married right ahead on her own advice. She probably thought she was doing well in marrying into sixty acres.

It is interesting that the application of sanctions does not confine itself to a single dereliction. In this case, according to the storyteller:

[461] Murphy was a terrible lazy farmer and wouldn't even till a patch of ground for a garden for himself or his stock, and the woman's people had to send up a load of potatoes for them. They told him when they beat him if he didn't turn into a farmer and do a man's work, till his garden, and provide, they would be up again and make him do it.

Family and community alike support them in their attitude. A woman could say bitterly, for she was childless:

> No matter how much money you have and how good-looking you are, if you don't have children, you're no good. But if you're ugly as the worst and have children you are all right.

The husband has every right to express his displeasure at his wife's barrenness. To have no children is a source of shame to him and a terrible disappointment in his desire to continue his line upon the farm. One woman put it:

> The man wants children because he is afraid others will tell him he is no good if he hasn't any. Children are the curse of the country, especially if you haven't any.

In the country districts they say that he may beat her and in their graphic phrase "bounce a boot off her now and then for it." Country belief still regards the woman as the offending partner in a childless marriage. Near Inagh one farmer, a returned Yankee, was regarded as an anomaly because, though childless, he treated his wife just as well as though she had many and did not get angry when he was twitted on his lack of an heir. They explained it by saying that he "knew it was his own fault."

The day of the "country divorce," as the farmers call it, is rapidly passing. In the old days, they say, a man might send a barren wife back to her parents, though Catholic law forbade him to marry again.. There are cases which illustrate that the custom survives in altered form. They are particularly revealing in our analysis of the desire to preserve the family unity and its identification with farm and household through the generations. Here the brothers act, sociologically, as a single individual in order to insure the desired continuity. For instance, in one case, a middling farmer of Corrofin, childless after several years, got a country divorce. He gave the land thereafter to his brother in return for a thousand pounds, which the brother had inherited in lieu

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CHAPTER VIII

Dispersal and Emigration

THE internal reorganization of the family consequent on the marriage of one of their number produces a marked change in the situation of the as yet unprovided-for brothers and sisters. The other members of the family broken up by the marriage of one of their number on the home farm must be provided for elsewhere. They feel themselves entitled to portions, either in the form of dowries to marry into another farm or of some other means of establishing themselves. If such provisions in fact are not made, conflict arises, as we saw in the case of the McDermott murder. A classical case in the Ennis region of Clare was that of an old farmer of substance who married a nineteen-year-old girl when he was eighty. When the birth of a son precipitated a crisis, he had to be protected from his scandalized relatives, sons, and daughters by the police. When he died the following year, he gave a hundred pounds each to the constable who protected him and the priest "plucky enough to marry me." His sons refused to attend his funeral.

Normally, however, the transfer of land and the break-up of the family which worked it is made with the fullest possible provision for the other children. The dowry brought in is utilized to that end, and the savings of a lifetime on the farm have been used. The following observations made by a Land Commission official, himself a small farmer's son

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593 428 and a man with many years' experience in Irish rural affairs, attempt to give a statement of the generalities. They express, however, an ideal rather than an actuality.

The average household consists of six persons [and the parents]. Of necessity not more than one could be provided for on the holding and assuming, for example, that the family consisted of two girls and four boys, the position would be somewhat as follows:

593 428 874 The eldest son would in the course of years assume ownership of the holding. A second son might be provided with a secondary education and might possibly win a County Council scholarship . . . enabling him to pursue a course of engineering or medicine practically free. In the event, however, of his not being so fortunate, the thrift of the family may enable him to pursue a similar course at the university, the intervals between terms and the long vacation being spent on the farm.

Some years ago medicine was the profession usually pursued provided the boy had no vocation for the priesthood. At that time the cost of his board was appreciably reduced by an arrangement through which neighbors' sons lodged together and brought with them supplies of potatoes, oatmeal, home-cured pork, in fact, provided for almost all their own food. When the boy is qualified to his own particular calling, to his credit it may be said that he denies himself many little luxuries in order to pay back the cost of his training and thus assist the other members of his family.

593 428 The third son either got trained in business and in due course started one of his own, or emigrated where he could also refund the cost to his parents. The fourth son might possibly become a primary school teacher, a civic guard, a tradesman [artisan] apprenticed by his father in the near-by town, or again his family might give him enough to marry into another small holding.

One of the girls received a dowry or, as they say here, she was "fortuned off" into another small holding of similar status. The second girl possibly favored nursing, teaching, business, or domestic service, or again possibly religion, or even a clerical position of some sort either here or abroad.

166 463 593 The above quotation states the generalities in terms of upward social mobility. The influx of the country people

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into the towns, into governmental, professional positions, and into the ranks of urban occupations must wait for special analysis in itself. It is not possible here to determine how great the effect of this movement from the small farms is upon the current much lamented overcrowding of the professions in Ireland. The point of interest for us is the dispersal of the farm group.

Naturally enough, this dispersal does not always occur so happily as in the above statement of the ideal. Yet the portioning off of the children and the success with which it is done is the pride as well as the duty of every farm family. A few examples will give the variations. They are more matters of success or failure to advance beyond the level of small farm life, but they show the genesis of the movement in the farm family. In a later section this subject will be dealt with in more detail. These examples, however, are typical, though the names are fictitious.

Leary of F —, a farmer with sixty acres, has a daughter married near-by with a four hundred pound fortune, and another, a nun in Mercy Convent, Ennis. Four sons have entered the priesthood, an expensive training from his point of view. A fifth is at home working, not yet thirty. Leary is a "strong" farmer, highly prosperous.

Tom Casey, K —, is a very poor holder with thirty acres of mountain and bog. Two sons and a daughter are still at home, and a bachelor brother works with him. Another daughter works for herself as a domestic servant in Ennis. One son Tom is apprenticed to a carpenter in Ennis. A daughter emigrated through the good graces of her aunt.

Michael Dunn of T — has twenty acres, but has not prospered. His two sons left at eighteen and twenty respectively to drive hackney automobiles in Ennis, an uncle there giving them a start. Another son now thirty and a daughter are still at home working the farm.

In a mountain townland, Pat Looney's father prospered, won the good graces of the landlord's agent, amassed four farms, the largest fifty acres, the smallest eighteen. He married off two

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593 578 428 daughters with two hundred pound fortunes, settled three sons and a daughter with her husband in each of the farms. Pat himself, the eldest, now about eighty, got the largest farm but not the one he wanted. He has been warring with his brothers and his neighbors ever since. He held out against his father for five years, refusing to marry and take his farm. In Pat's youth, land agitation and reform had not yet prevented subdivision and acquiring of new farms by a successful tenant. Pat on his fifty-acre mountain farm has married off a daughter locally at three hundred pounds and sent two sons out to America. Another daughter works in England. Two sons, aged forty-three and thirty-six, are at home and Pat hasn't made up his mind yet which one shall get the land.

593 167 The examples, various as they are, need not be multiplied. The sons and daughter who are not to be portioned at home, in the words of the Luogh residents, "must travel." To that end both the savings of the family, created through their united efforts under the headship of father and mother, and [583] the incoming dowry, are devoted. In Luogh there had been only four marriages in ten years; two of them were the usual farm-transferring matches, one a returned emigrant who married a boyhood sweetheart and bought a farm, and one a widower who took a second wife and a second fortune. An old woman described the situation: "There aren't any matches nowadays. Nobody has a fortune to give his daughter and the young men must travel." Yet the woman who [454] lamented this state of affairs was carefully husbanding half crowns for her baby granddaughter's fortune.

593 167 457 434 Nevertheless this necessary dispersal of the members of the family at its reorganization does not ordinarily destroy the family ties. The bonds of affection and family obligation still hold. If they have emigrated, the family members send back remittances and passage money for nephews and nieces and brothers and sisters left at home. A great many farms, especially in West and North Clare, are partially supported by Christmas gifts from Americans and other exiles. It is

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unfortunate that the authors have not statements of the amount of these annual remittances for local districts. The total for Ireland, however, is enormous. There is a marked tendency for emigration from a local region to perpetuate itself, sons and daughters of each generation going out to join the members of the last. One district round Cross to the west of Carrigaholt, a little settlement on the Loop Head peninsula which juts out from Clare into the Atlantic at the Shannon's mouth, said locally to be supported by sons in the Shanghai police force. The first to go became chief of police in the International Settlement there, and many places in the force have gone to men of Cross.

The authors had the opportunity of examining some of the family setting in which emigrant remittances operate in Luogh. There the greatest number of emigrants had gone out to Boston. In one family, there was a succession of nephews and nieces following uncles and aunts from the same farmhouse for four generations. In four recent cases Luogh boys and girls had married one another in Boston. In two more they had married in Ireland and emigrated together.

Remittances from sons and daughters arrive around Christmas. In one family the farmer's wife had written to children in America saying that the family were trying to acquire an addition to their holding from the Land Commission. The children sent them the purchase price. In this case the daughter sent her regular Christmas remittance as well. When she was admonished by her parents for such generosity, she wrote: "I would think it wasn't Christmas and I hadn't any father and mother if I didn't send them something."

Her mention of the festival in the same breath with her parents is understandable when it is realized that Christmas is the family festival *par excellence* in Ireland.

The role played by emigrated relatives in providing for

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the children upon the home farm and the role of the dispersed children in helping the old couple and the brother or sister at home is part of the general "friendliness" by which the Irish countryman sums up the family obligations. The two roles are felt to be the same, and they are described in the same terms, as the obligations of actual charity between country families, agricultural coöperation, and ceremonial assistance at marriages, wakes, and funerals. Brother and sister send back gifts to the home farm, especially when the old couple are still alive. Gifts of money, clothing, and presents of all descriptions are sent back. Geese, farm delicacies, and such mementos as shamrocks go from the farm to those relatives that keep in touch.

At family crises, such as death, marriage, and birth, the new bonds come strongly into play and, where possible, the dispersed relatives come back to the farm at that time. The emigrant returns, if he does so at all, to the very townland of his birth, either to buy the old place or to settle near-by. In fact, there are many instances of countrymen, returned Americans, Australians, South Africans, and British soldiers, who have roamed over the world but have never seen more of Ireland than their route to and from their port of embarkation and the nearest market towns.

The sentiments of place, farm, and family become so inextricably intermingled as to be almost one. Perhaps the peculiarly Irish type of song and music owes its character as well as its popularity to that fact. The laments for a dear one, especially a mother, and the pangs of exile are the major motives. They are sung to the same tunes and call forth the same tears.

The break-up of the family at the transfer of land has changed the relation between the dispersed children and the old couple, just as it has changed that between the new farm family and their parents. Control of expenditure, in fact all vestiges of the strict parental control, is perforce

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destroyed. The best example of this fact is the change which comes over the attitudes of the old people toward their children's personal expenditures. The economic corporation which they directed is destroyed with their headship of the group. Consequently, they no longer can demand the services of their children as before. Thus the authors saw several old couples doing their best to learn how much a returned emigrant had earned but, because of the change in position, not daring to ask outright. If the son had remained on the farm, they would not have hesitated to demand a strict accounting. Likewise, in such important matters as marriage, over which the parents would have had great authority as long as the son or daughter remained at home, the parents lose their control. More than one old couple remarked, on hearing from a distant exiled son of his marriage, that they wished him well but that he must please himself now that he was on his own.

A word more might be said to clarify the position of the dispersed relatives. They equally share the new attenuated bonds which take the place of the old closely integrated family group. But, as might be expected in the structure of a family, which, as we have seen, is based, not upon the principle of rigidity in classification as in many primitive kinship systems, but upon the principle of extensions of relationship outward from the nucleus of the immediate family, the bonds are stronger as the original relationship is closer. The children of each generation growing up on the home farm can look far oftener to a father's or mother's emigrant brother for aid when their own time comes to emigrate than to father's and mother's emigrant cousins. The closer relatives are the ones who most often step forward, though the obligation theoretically binds them all. The following incident from Luogh illustrates the clash between the varying degrees of relationship. Let the small farmer tell the story himself:

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593 602 A fellow named O'Dwyer – married to a cousin of the old woman out of Ballyheline [a neighboring townland] – was home from Australia one summer, looking a fine cut of a man with a new greatcoat and a fine hat on him. I saw him one day when we were all in Considine's shop for the old-age pension and knew who he was from the pictures of him. [After they had established recognition and struck up a friendship] he asked if he could take the boy (second son) out to Australia with him, and he would set him behind his bar. [He had a hotel there.] I said, yes, he could have him. After the fellow went back to Australia, he sent over fifty pounds for passage for Seumas. But didn't Seumas's sisters write from Boston and they swearing that if I let their brother go off from them to Australia, I'd never hear from them again. So Seumas went out to America to his sisters. And I sent back the fifty pounds, and sure wasn't it the devil's own work sending it back.

The new behavior, as this example shows, is that of the extended kindred already examined. Where emigration has not removed the brother and sister altogether, they are now "friends" and are bound by reciprocal obligations and sentimental attachment. The necessary disposal of their brothers and sisters provides for the continuance of the family unit upon the farm. The very mechanism which assures that continuance does the dispersing. Yet the dispersed do not leave the family. They stay within the bonds of kinship. They are united by the new more attenuated ties of cousinship. Their displacement, like that of the old people, is a regular social movement, providing for them, as it were, a new place and status, changing radically and necessarily their old family membership, yet still confining them within the web of interest and sentiment, though upon a new footing. Henceforward the relatives see one another, of course, less and less often and rely more and more upon the proxy of mementos and gifts.

593 In summary, the dispersal of the family is part of a general movement arising out of the re-formation of the family

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group. Forces within the relations of the members of the group bring it into being. Yet the dispersal is carried out very often in ways which depend also upon familial ties. The whole movement is carried on in the midst of an orderly and organic transformation which comes over the family regularly at marriage and death. Old and new meet at marriage in Ireland. Between them social organization is passed on though a prior group is partially destroyed.

Let us recapitulate, then, for a moment. Statistical statement of productive and consumptive behavior in rural economy revealed a marked difference between small and large farmers. Within that difference the small farmers presented a great statistical uniformity. Consequently, it was necessary to look beyond the numerical count to the actual behavior of the small farmers. In referring the question to the lives of the small farmers themselves, we were led to a new analysis of their behavior and to the discovery of a new uniformity.

The new uniformity, however, is of a different nature. It is itself a coherent and consistent pattern, widely extensive, and responsible to laws of inner development of its own. We are entitled, or rather compelled, to call it a system and to give it the character of other systems, where that word is used with precise meaning and is not warped into a catch-all of common speech.

For, it is evident, the intricate web of human movement and interrelationship involving objects, household and land, which the study of "matchmaking" reveals, is no random movement. It arises in response to definite needs of the family group. It performs a definite function of reorganization and recrystallization in the group. The manifold changes the match brings upon the lives of the family members, the new positions which they take up, and the new behaviors which are theirs are dependent upon its success in this function. We do not need to insist that they are

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fully dependent upon it. It is sufficient that they cannot be adequately understood without some assessment of its influence. If we keep this fact in mind, we are ready for an analytic interpretation of our data. The uniform social behaviors of the small farmers begin to form an interrelated whole.

Marriage, property transfer, and the dispersal of the family members derive their character from family relationships. The immediate family of father, mother, and children form a corporate group engaged in agriculture upon a small farm. The roles of the father and mother make them superordinate to the children. Theirs is the direction of the group enterprise. Within the group, technological roles correspond with family status. Economic endeavor, both upon the individual farms and in the form of coöperation between farms, is controlled through the operation of social forces springing from the family. In the testimony of the farmers themselves, that effort is but part of a larger constellation of behavior patterns, obligations, and sentiments governing the individual in other fields by virtue again of his place in the family group. In total, Irish small farm agriculture presents a picture, not of isolated individuals or units pursuing a course of the greatest economic gain, amassing material objects in response wholly to individual desires and selling labor as a commodity, but of a way of life, only a small part of which we have examined, in which the relations between individuals, the soil, productive work, and the material goods of the household constitute a web of social ties, bearing their own incentive and reward and determining the part of the individual in the labor and the goods of the group.

At marriage and at death, as we have seen, this web of relationships is disturbed. New individuals are introduced, old ones lost. The match brings a re-formation of the family involving a dispersal of former members and an introduction

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of a new set of component individuals into the relationships between land, goods, labor, and human beings.

In the light of this system and of the internal changes which are brought about within it, the Irish population statistics now may become interpretable. Late marriage and the high incidence of bachelorhood are associable with the reluctance of the old couple to renounce their leadership, the necessity of acquiring sufficient means to portion children, and the delay in dispersing the closed corporation of the family group until it is possible to establish the new one. The practical self-sufficiency of the family group makes it difficult to destroy. The identification of a single immediate family with the individual farm prevents the setting up of more than one new such group upon the land.

As we pointed out, subdivision of holdings practically ceased after 1852. Since then the struggle for land and legal reforms in land tenure have prohibited any great further division. The matchmaking system is very old in Ireland. The works of such Gaelic writers as Canon O'Leary describe it explicitly for the pre-famine period. With the cessation of subdivision of holdings came the necessity of providing for children elsewhere than on the land. From that same cessation of subdivision dates the high incidence of bachelorhood. In 1841, at the time of greatest population, age of marriage was normal. Then only 43 per cent of males between twenty-five and thirty-five were unmarried, not 72 per cent, as at present. Then only 15 per cent of males between thirty-five and forty-five were celibate, not 29 per cent as today. Figure 13 represents the percentages of unmarried males and females at each age in each subsequent census from 1841 to 1926.

Viewed in the light of this family structure, the decline of population becomes interpretable not as a flight from intolerable conditions, though economic distress had a powerful effect, not as a political gesture, though political

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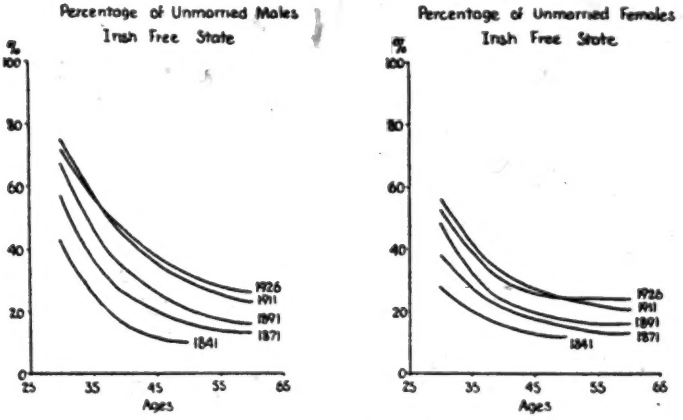
161 182 593 disturbance took its toll, but rather as a movement arising from the effect of all these causes upon a family system whose very nature predisposed it to disperse population and which could, therefore, accommodate itself to that dispersal when it occurred. Emigration, no new thing in 1845, ap-

FIGURE 13

PERCENTAGE OF UNMARRIED PERSONS, IRISH FREE STATE



The figures are taken from the censuses from 1841 to 1926.

pears as the logical corollary of this dispersal. It derives much of its character, such as assisted passages and remittances, from the social forces at work in the family. It can become a traditional movement like the movement from country to town without destroying the family structure or the rural culture whose members it takes away.

The authors do not mean to imply that anything within the social forces of the family as it exists in Ireland has had direct causal effect upon the peculiar statistics of Irish population. The authors would rather point out that the forces operative within that structure are of such a nature as to allow the society of which they are a part to continue to

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function in essentially similar fashion through the welter of economic, political, and other events which have impinged upon the human beings who have successively filled the structure. Likewise, the structure is capable of continued and virile existence in the present, governing the lives of its component individuals and modifying itself to take in new influences.

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Even in cases of illegitimacy, if the mother comes to marry another man than her child's father, a match may sometimes save the day. It serves the social purposes and repairs the damage, though it removes none of the stain upon one's local reputation. In spite of the strictness of country standards, many small farmers have married "poor, unfortunate girls" of this kind, without irreparable loss of respectability. Yet even then the attitude of the community fits the familistic norm. Such cases are felt to be very unusual and special departures from custom. They are matters for some surprise and congratulation. 348 183 581

The moral standards of the countryside involve a most strict control of the young people in sexual matters. Premarital virginity is the ideal. It is a double standard, of course. The young lads are not, or were not until recently, expected to be so pure as the girls. 183 836 562

The sexual urges of the older people are deemed adequately satisfied in marriage. Adultery very seldom seems to come into the reckoning of the small farmers. This is part of the equation of sexual appetite and familistic aspirations. The country people know something of town prostitutes and have heard of occasional marital lapses in the countryside as well. But these matters are not of great interest. The incidents, as far as one can judge, are of infrequent occurrence. Marital fidelity is not only the ideal; it seems to be the fact as well. It seems even to be taken for granted, and any other course felt inconceivable. 837 183 [593]

Thus we must look to the relations among the unmarried young couples to see the chief point of pressure in the rural system of values. That is the area in which there is nearly all the smoke and not a little fire. 834 571

Although premarital virginity and complete abstinence from any kind of sexual activity is the ideal for the young, local custom emphasizes marriage all the while. Local dances and other festivities are the chief times of meeting

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which beasts feed him in their turn. He need go to town only for clothing and sundries, for flour and tea, and to sell at the fairs the calves and yearlings which bring in his principal monetary income and provide thus for whatever he cannot produce at home. These cattle go to big farmers, ranchers and shippers; and with the sale his participation in trade and commerce, in 'business', is finished except for his account with the shopkeeper (and in late years, the creamery). As you can well imagine, it is a livelihood little connected with the outside world, and now that agrarian reform has made him full owner of his holding, it is little open to disturbance from the outside.

This is the external view of the small farm. It is the view that usually satisfies the economist. But if one probes deeper and looks at the small farmer's livelihood from within, a fuller picture appears.

That the small farmer is a family man even at work is important for the study of human behaviour. Eight out of ten people working in agriculture in Ireland work not for wages and salaries but by virtue of their family relationship. The work a man does and the directions he gives and receives take form within a social group. That fact yields an opportunity for the anthropologist. Here, in a modern country, is an economy in which there are other controls on labour than those we know—money, contracts, individual profit. To under-

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stand these controls is to reach at least one nucleus of the countryman's way of life.

In County Clare, as in all rural Ireland, the small farmer's family lives upon the holding it works. As a rule, the farmhouse is an isolated building standing upon its own ground and forming an integral part of the holding. This is the familiar type of farm we know; Meizen calls it the *Einzelhof*. There are many other types of settlement in Ireland: villages whose fields lie round about in somewhat the fashion of the Russian *mir*; striping fields; and the crazy-quilt pattern of 'rundale'; but the *Einzelhof* has won out historically. Anyway, whatever the type of holding, the farm family spends its entire life upon it: sleeping, eating, giving birth and dying there, and sallying forth every day for work. Whether or not there is a topographic identity between house and land, there is a social one. The countryside knows the farm as a unit. The farm shares the name of the family working it. It is inalienably associated with them.

Since cattle play so large a part in rural economy, it is natural that this unit should be known and judged as 'the place of so many cows'. For in Clare the land is valued for its pasture. It is divided into 'field' for grazing, and 'meadow' where the grass is cut for hay, and 'garden', the small tillage plot. In mountain areas, it may also include rough mountain grazing, called 'moun-

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462 obligations. It is a function of the relationship of husband and wife within the family.

But it is more, too. The attitudes of the countryside toward men's work and women's work show that their respective skills are regarded also as integral parts of the personalities of all men and women of the countryman's own kind. Here we can see how strongly social dispositions influence both mind and vocabulary. 'Natural' is a word very frequently on the countryman's lips. Thus, it is 'natural' for a woman to be a better milker, her smaller hands are proof. And it is laughably 'unnatural' that a man should bother about the sale of eggs. This division is embedded in tradition, too. Luogh still tells a humorous old tale of the spades, men's tools, that used to work of themselves in the olden days, till a woman forgot to say "God bless the work" to them. This division is bolstered in [789] magic, too, for the 'coulter of a plough', that masculine implement, can bring back the butter the fairies have taken.

The division of labour between the sexes is not the only important division within the countryman's pattern of farm work. Work is divided just as much upon the basis of age. Within the masculine sphere, male family members divide the practice of masculine techniques. Within the feminine sphere, there are similar divisions.

462 593 Let us look at the men at their work. The father and husband is normally owner and director of

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the enterprise. The farm and its income are vested in him. The farm bears his name in the community and sons are spoken of as his 'boys'. In the draining of a field or the sale of cattle at a fair, the sons, even though fully adult, work under their father's eye, and refer necessary decisions to him.

But this relationship is much more than economic. Perhaps the best way of describing it is to trace its development. The child forms part of the productive unit which is his own family. His growing up is also an apprenticeship. He learns the techniques which will make him a full-fledged member of his class; but there is no divorce between technical and non-technical training. All he learns fits him for one end—to become a farmer-father-husband in a family of his own.

The child sees his father as owner, director and principal worker of the farm. From his example, he learns which are men's tasks and he learns to value the skills they demand. In family deliberations he learns, too, the nice balance between the needs of household and land. It is true he learns these techniques in a narrow school; his father makes sure that he does not deviate from the right and traditional pattern, which folklore, adage and the censure of the village support. But he learns well, by example, competition and practice.

This process is the daily experience of many years; it is very gradual and is embedded in tradi-

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462 tional social life. The boy's first duties, as soon as
593 he can speak and walk, are to run on petty errands
857 to neighbours and near-by friends. Until he is seven and passes through first communion, his place is in the house with the women, and he shares the same bed with his sisters. After that year, he leaves his mother's apron strings, and is slowly drawn into men's ways; he is thrown more and more with his elder brothers and sleeps with them henceforward. In remote regions he takes off girl's clothing for the first time; for girl's clothing has protected him from the fairies, they say. Both socially and economically he is becoming a male, but his male status is still very little. By the time he is ten or eleven, he is brought home from school when needed to take part in the important agricultural work of the year. But not until he passes confirmation and leaves school, usually at the same time, does he take on full men's work and assume men's clothing. Even then, as he reaches maturity, and takes on more and more the heavy tasks of the farm, he never escapes his father's direction. Only when his father makes over the farm to him, at death or at his own marriage, can he assume command, and with it full adult status.

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Economic apprenticeship is thus a process of conditioning within the family. But there is no separation of economic and non-economic spheres. The father's direction of the enterprise coincides with his dominant, controlling role as parent and

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adult; the boy learns work as he learns manhood.

Also, the child grows up within the full complex of life within the farm family. His first petty errands are a mere incident in the relationship he builds up with his parents and brothers. He learns not only his work but the whole code of conduct which constitutes the folkways of his class, at their hands. This conduct is itself part of his relation to them. It ranges all the way from the errands he runs for his superiors in the family to the learning of his prayers and the development of the sentiments which make sexual behaviour of any kind an offence, and of that within the family, incest.

Consequently, in so well-knit a group, the command which his father (and his mother) exercises over the son in farm work is only one aspect of that control. His subordination continues as long as his father lives. Even though the major work of the farm devolves upon the son and his brothers, they have no control of the direction of farm work nor the disposal of the farm's income. I say the son and his brothers, for all the sons are equal in this subordination; rural Ireland knows neither primogeniture nor junior right. As long as they remain at home upon the farm they share this status equally.

The behaviour that reflects this state of affairs can be readily observed. Sons go to market and fair from the time they are ten or twelve, but they buy or sell little if anything. Father and sons can be

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593 seen together at the local markets, but it is the father who does the bargaining. Their attitudes are in agreement with this arrangement. Once I asked a countryman about it at a potato market in Clare. He explained he could not leave his post for long because his full-grown son wasn't well enough known yet and was not yet a good hand at selling. If a son in Luogh and other Clare communities wants a half-crown to go to a hurley match, he must get it from his father. The son may earn money in employment off the farm, on the roads, [465] or as a labourer, but even then he is expected to contribute everything he receives to the household, as long as he remains on the farm. Very often, as the author saw in Luogh, in work on land division, the old fellows will walk to the pay-off to collect for themselves the wages their sons have earned.

You will say, perhaps, that all this has a very familiar ring; it is characteristic of closely knit farm families everywhere. So it is, but we are prone to disregard the familiar; we forget that the familiar stuff of life has often more important implications than the exotic. In the Irish countryside we must not undervalue the familiar. For the implications of these factors of family life are the signposts along the road.

593 885 In the countryside this subordination of the sons does not gradually come to an end. It is a constant. Even at forty-five and fifty, if the old couple have not yet made over the farm, the countryman re-

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mains a 'boy', both in farm work and in the rural vocabulary. In 1933, a deputy to the Dáil raised considerable laughter in the sophisticated Dublin papers when he inadvertently used the country idiom in expressing country realities. He pleaded for special treatment in land division for "boys of forty-five and older"—boys who have nothing in prospect but to wait for their father's farm. For 'boyhood' in this instance is a social status rather than a physiological state. A countryman complained to me in words which tell the whole story. "You can be a boy forever," he said, "as long as the old fellow is alive."

Had we more time we might devote a long inquiry to this relationship, to its affective content, to the mutual respect and pride of father and son. The Irish countryside values the stern father perhaps more highly than the indulgent one; the peasant father takes great pride in a sturdy successor and competent fellow-worker. Camaraderie and intimacy may not flourish between them; but deeper-felt affections underlie formal respect and gruff command. The Irish mother, compassionate, indulgent, is of course a counterpoise to this stern paternality. She has an emotional role in the balance of reciprocal sentiments as indispensable to the family's existence as the economic role she plays. Freud might illuminate us about the sort of conflicts such a human structure engenders, but he has little to say of the far more important, and

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593 more apparent, balance of emotional forces which it entails.

For this balance is the health of a complete social organism. The countryman who occupies boyhood status so long ordinarily does not revolt. His economic dependence galls him perhaps at times, but he cannot regard it as an injustice. That dependence is itself a product of healthy balance. He has expectancies and prospects; father and mother owe him obligations for which he can and does wait; emotional bonds are fiercely strong, for there is little opportunity to diffuse them. The solidarity of his own family is strengthened through competition with other socio-economic units. The endless petty disputes of the countryside over rights of way, boundaries, cattle trespasses, drainages, are much more than defences of property. "The two grandfathers" of the contestants "began it" is the usual defence in court. That solidarity is a mountain of strength against the outside world. "Defending [195] Tim Flanagan's title" is the jocular way of describing armed resistance to eviction in the country districts in Clare. For Tim Flanagan worked a farm with ten strong adult sons; evicting ten armed stalwarts is no small matter for the best of police. Sons and brothers are a better title than the clearest deed.

The controls in farm work, then, are those of a social group—the family. The countryman at work is little concerned with the usual economic cate-

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gories. He is a family man. He may be the shrewdest of traders and the best of farmers, but what gives him his occupational status, determines his pattern of work, provides his incentive, is a set of dispositions arising in the balanced interests and reciprocal obligations of the social group to which he belongs.

We can test this conclusion. There are a large number of small farms in the countryside worked by what we can call incomplete families. They are worked by spinsters, bachelors, widowers, widows. In such farms the person owning the farm exercises control. A widow, for instance, is helped out by a male relative—brother, nephew or son. The male takes over the tasks which would ordinarily fall to a farm father. Even if the widow retains control of expenditures and disposal of farm goods, the bargaining, buying and selling in such typically masculine enterprises as the cattle fair rests with the man. For instance, in one example which came to my knowledge, a 'landless' young man pleaded successfully to the Land Commission for an addition to his aunt's holding. It was he who carried out the negotiations successfully. The feeling of the community was sufficiently strong to push the young man into a position beyond his status. Some male must represent the aunt and her holding in the outer world. With old bachelors, a nephew moves in and works the farm, but the old fellow keeps strict control, even to regulating sums spent by the

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nephew for amusement. Where a widower had a small son, the son was taken by a childless sister. She brought him up to inherit her husband's farm, and her brother might marry again. Two spinsters spent their lives on a farm worked by their cousins.

To the country-people, such arrangements, successful enough economically sometimes, are makeshifts, subjects for commiseration. One hears often enough such phrases as these: "It's a hard life she has with only the brother and no husband to help her." "He's all by himself with only his son there on the land, poor fellow." Even government officials nowadays recognize the social value of the full family. A household of father, mother and sons gets preference in land division. The work to be done is the strengthening of the social group; personal enrichment and use of the soil are merely incidental.

Up to this point, I have described the countryman as though he worked in isolation from his fellows. In a measure this is true, for his first duties are to his immediate family. Still, there is a great deal of work which goes on between farms. There is a certain amount of co-operation of an informal kind. Work in the countryside is permeated with a give-and-take of reciprocal aids.

Co-operation of this sort takes many forms. Men lend tools, or work with tools of their own for 'friends' and neighbours, particularly at mowing,

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584 675 will. Reforms in land tenure have made it necessary recently to give an age-old custom proper legality, since the transfer of the farm is involved.

584 675 888 In the 'writings' the father of the groom makes over the farm and all its appurtenances to his son. In return, the girl's fortune goes to him. The father also makes provision for his own maintenance and that of his wife. It is his abdication, and like Charles V, he keeps only one monastery out of a vast empire for himself. He usually reserves the right to the 'grass of a cow', his keep, the use of the hearth, and the use of a room in the house. That room is the 'west room' already described, the best in the house. Thus, the cycle of life on the farm is completing itself. He and his wife step down from active command.

584 593 In payment for his abdication, he receives the fortune of the girl. A fair arrangement, we should say. But we should be wrong; it is much more. True to the obligations of his social role, he may not use it entirely for himself. The Irish small farmer does not retire, like the Iowan, to sunny California and the Townsend plan. He must meet the interests of the group. Ordinarily, the other children have been stalwart workers in the farm family corporation. They are not to be 'settled on the land'; some other provision must be made. They may come forward now for their long due reward and their corporate share.

Here the purposes behind the match show them-

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selves again. One daughter is ordinarily married into a near-by farm. The family makes a match for her. With her, of course, goes a fortune equal to that the son's bride brings in. Perhaps, a son may be similarly married into a farm where there are only daughters; even though a *cliamhan isteach*, 'son-in-law going-in', as he is graphically called in Irish, must pay a much larger fortune. He has to overcome the anomaly felt in reversing the usual role of sons and daughters and has to compensate the family for the loss of 'their name on the land'.

But it is a very fortunate farmer indeed who can provide for all his sons and daughters so. Usually, only the heir and one daughter are married and dowered, the one with the farm, the other with the fortune. All the rest, in the words of the Luogh residents, 'must travel'.

Thus, either at the match or in preparation for it comes the inevitable dispersal of the farm family. The unit must break up. Time and change are inevitable in human affairs; only an orderly social mechanism can tame their ravages.

The match provides rural Ireland with this mechanism. It accomplishes the necessary transformation of the family. The balance of interests and duties, of prides and loyalties, hinges upon it.

There are two facets to the change, an external and an internal. The distinction is understandable, it is that between internal constitution and external face. Or better, let us state it in figurative terms.

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182 Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage" was pro-
584 found sociology. Life in organized society is a
593 drama. In the match, even though the marriage of one principal is the theme, the action includes the whole cast. Internally, the action forcibly and finally changes the interrelations of all the characters; externally, the parts they play to the audience alter and grow. The changes must run their course till the action resolves itself in the crystallization of a new situation; and the act is over.

It is this dramatic quality which gives the sociologist and the social anthropologist the right to use such terms as 'structure', 'dynamics' and 'equilibrium'. He has that right in describing the life of the countryman. The match brings changes in dramatic completeness. It forces the relationships of the constituent human beings into a new equilibrium and creates a scaffolding for new behaviours and sentiments.

182 Let us look at the external change first. The sons
593 and daughters who must travel are forced out of
166 the closely knit group in which they once had their being. Yet, unless they emigrate beyond hope of call, they do not drop out of sight. The sentiments of years of close association do not die out. It has been a matter of pride and duty with the farm father to provide well for his children. Wherever he can, he has found them an opening. He has sent them into the towns, into the shops, the professions, the trades, and into the Church. As in nearly

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all modern countries today, there is in Ireland a great and constant flow of population from country to city. Much of this is made up of the farm sons and daughters.

Yet, they do not always go to the towns, of course. The farm father tries to settle them on the land round about him, too, as we have seen. In either case, nevertheless, they are not lost to the new family which supplant them on the farm. They are merely removed a single step. They have become 'friends'. They are part of the extended kinship system which stretches from the farm-house door. They owe the obligations of kindred which we saw in farm work; they are the uncles and their children the cousins of the new generation in the home farm.

Out of this sort of expansion Irish kinship is built. The point of integration is the farm father and mother, whose relinquishment of command forces dispersal. Projected backward and upward through the generations, to common grandfathers and great-grandfathers, this transferred remembrance of the duty and sentiment between father and son unites ever wider circles of descendants in the ties of brotherhood. It provides a scaffolding for the behaviours of 'friendliness' and 'cooring' between members of contemporaneous generations. In it each man has a place, reckoned upon 'blood' as he calls it. With the word, a social structure of interwoven habit patterns and emotional

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ing townland) was home from Australia one summer, looking a fine cut of a man with a great new coat and a fine hat on him. I saw him one day when we were all in Considine's shop for the old-age pension and knew who he was from the pictures of him. (After they had established recognition and struck up a friendship) he asked could he take the boy (my second son) out to Australia with him, and he would put him behind his bar (he had a hotel out there). I said yes, he could have him.

"After this fellow went back to Australia, he sent over £50 for passage for Seumas. But didn't Seumas' sisters write from Boston and they swearing that if I let their brother go off from them to Australia I'd never hear from them again. So Seumas went out to America to his sisters. I sent back the £50, and sure wasn't it the devil's own work sending it back."

So much for the external change which the match brings. What now can we learn of the internal change and the new internal equilibrium that change brings?

The transfer of the land to the son who marries carries with it a drastic reformation in the relations of the household members who remain. The headship of the parental couple is profoundly modified. The 'old people' move into a new status, that of old age. For both the man and the woman it means an abandonment of power; they are no longer the 'man and woman of the house'.

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182 593 888 Where the transition is smooth, father and son continue to work together. One family in Luogh, for example, was regarded as a model of family harmony. It was made up of a young man and his wife and two children and the old couple. But the old man worked by his side, and the son deferred to his judgment. The greatest compliment the neighbours had for them was this: "Look at the Careys; old Johnny gives his boy a hand in everything. You wouldn't know which one has the land."

182 745 593 888 The introduction of the old-age pension has facilitated this transfer. Originally designed for the support of the aged in an industrial population in England, it has speedily woven itself into the fabric of Irish rural life. Nowadays, the farmer can turn over his land at the age of seventy. In doing so, he divests himself of his property which stands in the way of his receiving the pension. One countryman of my acquaintance sang the praises of the pension [434] in no uncertain terms. His words show clearly that, even with this new source of income at his disposal, the old, abdicating farm father still forms part of the family economic unit. "To have old people in the house", he said, "is a great blessing in these times, because if you have one it means ten bob a week and if you have two it means a pound a week coming into the house. You take a man like O'Donoghue (a neighbour) and every Friday he will go to Corofin to collect his ten bob. He may buy a couple of bottles of porter but he'll spend the

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rest on things for the household and then come home with a few shillings to go into the common fund."

For the old couple are still very important within the family. Their years of command do not disappear overnight. The change must be handled smoothly. The happiest compromise is that one farmer of Inagh described: "Every morning, even after I was married, I would go to the old man and ask him what I should do for the day, and the old man would say it is now time to do this or that, or the cows should have something done for them, or the garden be prepared. I would go then and spend twenty-thirty minutes doing what the old man said, and then I would go do my own business."

The solution rural Ireland suggests to this problem is deference and respect. There can be no equality between the generations. In the words of one local sage, who could discuss the matter with the experience of a Dorothy Dix: "When the new woman is brought into the house, she may have modern ideas and be hoity-toity about the way to do things. So the old woman and the new woman wouldn't get along. The old man wouldn't say anything but he would light his pipe and go out till the squabble is over. It might get so bad that the old woman would get up and leave, and go live with her daughter some place. She could do this if the daughter's husband's mother were dead, even though the father might still be living in the house.

"But these squabbles are bad things. If the new

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182 woman would ask the old person her opinion on
593 how to do this and that there never would be any
888 trouble and the new wife could go ahead and do just
578 as she pleased. Then the old woman would think she was doing it the way that she said. If the daughter-in-law did what she ought, she would do this and treat the old folks nice."

Deference and respect solve the problem, then, but if they do not, it is the older woman who must leave. That this should be the case reflects one great function of farm marriage. The son must cleave to his bride. If the worst comes to the worst, the new family may 'turn the old people out on the side of the road'. Terrible as such an ending would be, it is the necessary one. For the pattern of family and land must continue in the persons of the new man and woman and their children.

182 This desire is the binding force in the relations
593 of all the household. It is as strong in the old people
887 as in the new couple. The new balance of senti-
602 ments finds its expression in the inclusion of the children born to the young man and woman. Like so much of their behaviour, the country-people describe the new ties in terms of the 'help' they afford to the family corporation. And once again, naturally, an economic explanation is all too elliptical. A thoughtful farmer of Inagh generalized the matter in words which show the identity between help in farm work and social reciprocities: "When there are children in the house, the old

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people are a great help to the mother, because the old woman would nurse the youngsters and see they didn't fall into the fire or something of that nature. The old man would keep on at his work just as long as he was able because it was in the nature of things that he had always done so. The old woman would help in the house. If there was a squabble between the mother and the daughter, the old woman would be more likely to stand up for the daughter. She would also teach her how to do things and have more patience than the mother. The grandfather would show the boy how to do things and would have more patience than the father."

Accordingly, the chief duty of the 'new woman' is to bear children. She succeeds or fails as a supplier of new persons to the family. Only with children can the new balance complete itself and the essential social continuity be assured.

The old couple appraise their daughter-in-law upon her success in this role. The first year of the girl's marriage is a time of apprenticeship. Her work is light. Highly ceremonialized custom grants her an occasional escape back to her own people. Her major duty is pregnancy, and the old couple watch her like a hawk for signs of fertility. All during her child-bearing years the old people will help her, praising her in terms of her increase, and showing as great an interest in the arriving children as she does herself.

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182 593 606 842 One countryman of North Clare put that first year into words: "At first", he said, "the boy's people make much of the new woman. They would hardly let her work at all. This carries on for seven or eight months, and if then the old people don't see evidence of increase of young, they get angry and abuse her. But if they do, they don't let her do any work at all now and are so proud."

In such a situation barrenness is a curse and a disgrace. The husband has every right to express his disappointment and his displeasure. It is a source of shame to him as well. He fails in preserving the continuity of his line upon the land.

One childless woman of Inagh in Clare knew bitterly how much both family and community support these attitudes: "No matter how much money you have," she said, "no matter how good-looking you are, if you don't have children, you are no good. But if you are ugly as the worst and have children, you are all right." Then she went on, to perpetrate an Irish bull, perhaps, but to express the matter very forcibly: "The *man wants children* just as much as the woman. He is afraid others will tell him he is no good if he hasn't any. Children are the curse of this country, especially if you haven't any."

182 593 428 Nevertheless, there are other ways of ensuring the continuity. They 'keep the name on the land' too, but they are makeshifts at best. These makeshifts transfer control of the land, as does the match.

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But in each case, they conform to the system of values lying at the centre of the countryman's way of life. They are social detours, ways past the obstacles of adverse circumstance and bad luck.

For instance there used to be, not long ago, what was known as a 'country divorce'. In the old days, they say, a farmer might send a barren wife back to her parents. He could not marry again, of course; Catholic law forbids it. But he could do something just as effective in assuring the family descendants. He could remarry, not in his own person, but in that of his brother. The two men are equivalent in status, why should they not act sociologically as a single individual. Even today this device survives. Thus a farmer of Corofin, in North Clare, could make use of it. Childless after several years, he got a 'country divorce'. Then he gave the land to his brother, in return for a large fortune, on the stipulation that his brother should marry. One brother thus got wife and farm; the other the dowry. The identity of land and family were preserved for another generation.

What other devices are possible has already appeared in what I previously called 'incomplete families'. Nephews, nieces, even grandchildren may be brought in. In time, a match is made for them, and normal succession assured. The former owners move to the 'west room'; they become the old people, and the pattern of a complete farm family unit is restored. To the country-people it

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182 is only the 'crabbit' person who will sell the land,
602 and 'go to town and drink the money'. Such con-
428 duct is indefensible, and for good reason. It runs counter to every law of kinship and local custom.

But in the case of a young widow, a conflict can
182 arise. The countryside recognizes only dimly, if at
589 all, the right of a woman to hold land in her own
428 person. That does not mean she cannot exercise
593 full control and work the land herself, which she often does. Rather, she is regarded as holding it in trust for a brother or a son of her husband or her father. She cannot alienate it from the patrilineal line to which it belongs. The conflict arises because she herself moves between two such lines; her father's and her husband's.

Consequently, a widow remains upon the farm only if her children are growing up. If they are very young she returns to her father's farm, and a husband's brother takes over. If she is childless, she is hardly regarded as having moved out of her
[766] own kindred; she is buried, when she dies, not with her husband but with her father.

Even if she marries, she and her new husband
182 merely hold the land in trust. The second husband
428 and his children are 'strangers to the land'. The
587 rightful heir by blood, whose 'name' is on the
593 land, may turn them out. So strong is the identifica-
578 tion. The woman gets the place only as a mother of the family's sons. One must remember that I am not speaking of formal title or legal right. They

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may be often quite different and run counter to rural values, breeding strife and forcing the aggrieved to seek redress outside the law.

Here, then, is the new equilibrium in the countryman's social life. The match provides a transition between the generations. Within the family unit, it provides for the establishment of a new nuclear group. It makes room for an essential continuity in which all the members may share and round which all their interests may be centred. Externally, it regathers those whom it must disperse. Round this dispersal, the web of kinship can be built. In the persons of the old people moved one step toward death, and in the identifications round them, 'descent' and 'blood' and 'the name on the land', the emotions of human groups can find their nexus.

In this movement, household, land, adult status, economic control, all move together. Marriage is a turning point round which rural life hinges. It is a structural centre. Every tie between human beings is modified. Then, in a new form, they can crystallize again—to give scope for movement, to allow continuities, to habituate human beings to new social places.

The whole of this movement takes place within a frame of human sentiments, ambitions and desires. Emotion lends its force. Convention, habit and the sanctions of public opinion and private anger keep the bounds and punish transgression. Public honour and self-satisfaction reward conformity.

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a more elaborate scale perhaps, the country farm house kitchen. Like its country counterpart it is the seat of family life.

Upstairs, a front room facing the street is transformed, by family portraits, an ornamental mantle and a piece or two of good mahogany, into a ceremonial parlour. Behind this, range the bedrooms of the family. Perhaps, in affluence and refinement there is an upstairs sitting-room as well. For the shop is no mere place of business. It is first of all a household, of which one section and one only is devoted to the world of affairs.

The family which this household houses and supports, in the majority of cases, works the shop in much the same way that the family of the farmer works the land. It conducts its business as a united corporation in which all members may take a hand and each have his place. Husband and wife tend the counter together and between them shopkeeping is divided; sons and daughters work as shop-assistants, as long as they remain at home. Only when affluence lifts the shop to importance and dignifies the shopkeeper with the title and station of merchant, expanding his business to wholesaling, is this arrangement greatly modified.

Yet, self-sufficient as this familistic shop-world is, the countryman has many a connection with it. It lives its own quiet life and plies its own trade so different from the farmer's work upon the farm. Town life breeds its own sentiment and weaves its

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visits ranging in length from one to seven weeks between 1961 and 1966 to complete our project. During the 19 months that we dwelled on the island, most of our research was directed toward documenting the contemporary culture of Inis Beag its technological, economic, political, social, religious, esthetic, and recreational aspects. We also investigated informal and formal education and the personality traits created by it, reconstructed Inis Beag history of the past century by examining historical materials of many sorts and probing the memories of elderly respondents, and recorded cultural change in process.

The research techniques that we employed are standard ethnographic ones: the guided and open-ended interview, external and participant observation, collection of life histories, photography, and phonography. Two departures from methodological orthodoxy were our use, as projective devices, of literary works and a sixty-two-verse ballad that I composed. A dozen islanders of both sexes and three age groups read at our request three books portraying Inis Beag culture, and we recorded and analyzed their varied responses. My ballad, now embedded in the island folklore tradition, is based on a shipwreck and rescue off Inis Beag that we witnessed, and a series of incidents which ensued during the following months. Alterations made by local singers after it was completed and the reactions to it by the islanders gave us insights into Inis Beag culture and personality which would have been difficult to obtain under other circumstances of fieldwork. I must add that the ballad was a product of exuberant cultural involvement and the satisfactions of "creative endeavor." Its research implications were unanticipated.

The Inis Beag islanders qualify as folk people in almost every respect, according to anthropological definition (Lewis 1960:1) the population has maintained its stability for at least two hundred years; there is a strong bond between the peasants and their land, and agriculture provides them with the major source of their livelihood; production is mainly for subsistence and is carried on with a simple technology, which includes as primary implements the digging stick, spade, and scythe, the island folk participate in a money economy, but barter still persists; a low standard of living prevails, and the birth rate is high; the family is of central importance, and marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare; the island is integrated into the county and national governments and is subject to their laws, the people long have been exposed to urban influences, have borrowed cultural elements from other rural areas on the mainland, and have integrated them into a relatively stable system; and, finally, the experience of living under foreign rule for over three centuries has created in the islanders an attitude of dependence and, at the same time, one of hostility toward the government which continues to this day. The only conditions in Inis Beag which run counter to those in most other peasant groups are low death and illiteracy rates. The Irish shun the term peasant as applied to individuals or communities, for the same reason that elitists in developing countries eschew the term primitive as applied to traditional cultural forms found in societies incorporated into newly formed states. The causes of this attitude must be examined next.

During the past hundred years, Ireland has experienced a vigorous nativistic movement—provoked by seven centuries of English domination, linked with nationalism as the Irish sought to assert their independence, focused on the

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628
829 passersby, and live more frugally and save more as a result. Gruff, impatient, and
often impolite, they talk rapidly in high pitched voices and shout at their beasts
[273] and at one another from a distance, and on occasion they will use profanity. Inis
Thiar men drink more than Inis Beag men, it is claimed; rather than sipping
slowly and savoring their stout and whiskey, they consume it quickly and are more
concerned with the effects that it produces. It is admitted in Inis Beag that all
Irish are inquisitive and disposed to gossip about their fellows, but islanders to
the west are openly so and will "demand" information from tourists and will
[593] discuss one another quite freely. Braver, "bolder," and less concerned with morality,
men from Inis Thiar rowed to the freighter on several occasions and contested
successfully with local folk for salvage, which caused some Inis Beag wives to
[502] deride their husbands for not possessing these qualities. Women of Inis Thiar also
are thought to be braver and bolder, and remain less in their homes, visit relatives
and acquaintances and the shops more often, and in general participate more in
social events than do their sisters to the east. Despite being extremely critical of
Inis Thiar folk for possessing the above and many other less prominent traits, the
people of Inis Beag grudgingly admit that their neighbors possess greater *esprit*
[167] *de corps* and enjoy life more than themselves. Once a person emigrates from Inis
Beag, he or she seldom returns; but Inis Thiar emigrants are "clever" and do well
abroad, and often return with earnings to remain at home, especially women who
come back with "fortunes" to seek husbands.

829 The attitudes of islanders toward those living on the mainland—"towns-
186 people" or "city folk"—reveal a primitivistic bias which probably can be traced
[121] back to the Viking occupation, when towns first were established in Ireland and
primitive Celts became transformed into peasants: "that primitive people retain
a morality which civilized people tend to lose; that a man's moral worth declines
in rough proportion to his distance from the soil; that civilization must be held
accountable for man's noteworthy catalogue of vices;" (Ardrey 1961:147–148).
Inis Beag folk regard themselves as impeccably moral and mainlanders, although
fellow Catholics, as immoral; yet the "progressiveness" of the latter is envied
secretly and gives rise to the sensitivity of islanders to the real and imagined
denigration of them by mainlanders for their backwardness. Mainland Irish are
[291] thought to be overly pecuniary, dishonest, rude, and promiscuous. When visiting
towns and cities on the mainland, Inis Beag people for many years have worn main-
land attire so as not to be singled out and ridiculed. They are ashamed of their
English speech—even though adults speak the tongue with greater proficiency
than many urban dwellers—and believe that they are prey to dishonest shopkeepers,
[123] who are ever ready to take advantage of their ignorance and naiveté. Whenever
my wife and I paid short visits to a nearby port or to Dublin, we were requested by
islanders to make purchases, have repairs made under our name, and transact other
business for them because we were "too clever to be cheated." Once in the city, the
folk miss Inis Beag with its clear air and broad expanses, and they complain of
the tall buildings (seldom more than four stories high) which "press in" on them,
the bustle of the main street, the curious stares of townspeople, and the dirtiness
of buildings and roads. In claiming that few islanders would prefer to live there

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624 876 [793] [554] more independent of the curate (One in recent years quit his post, it is held, because he chafed at restrictions imposed on him by the priest.); also, they are apolitical and participate less in the gamut of local affairs. The prestige of the headmaster derives from his having been selected by the parish priest who supports his actions, his status as a "scholar," and the discipline that he exerts in the school with its vestigial effects on those who have graduated. Few islanders will openly contest his decisions in school and in civic matters.

The important nonacademic tasks performed by the headmaster are signing official forms—a duty that he shares with the bailiff, drawing up and witnessing the signing of wills, writing letters for the islanders, especially those directed to the county council and departments of the central government, and giving advice on such matters as the advisability of emigrating and of matrimonial matches. [571] Like the curates, the headmasters seldom have tried to direct community projects and social affairs, other than dances and inter-island competitions. The present headmaster considers himself atypical in many respects, in that he is youthful, has exceptional skill in playing the accordion, likes companionship and the festivities of party and pub, and has rapport with older boys and young men with whom he associates more than did his predecessors; as a result, he is the prime mover in social events—organizing dances and donating his musical talent. Older islanders often find him aloof and will apologize for "taking his time" when seeking favors of him.

895 • 593 Parents have little contact with the headmaster as regards the education of their children, and, although permitted and sometimes urged to do so, they seldom visit the school. They will consult with him about such matters as health problems of their children, but not about educational policies; nor do they complain to him 895 of his role as pedagogue—"What the teacher does is right." Because of the severity 896 of his discipline, and that of the other two teachers, and the fear that it arouses in [861] his pupils, parents use him as a threat in disciplining their children at home. This [123] is a distinction that he shares with the nurse and her hypodermic needle and me with my large size and robust manner; being the ominous *Fear an Stáisiún* ("Man of the Station," because my wife and I rented for a time an apartment in the coast guard station) made it difficult for me to obtain young people as respondents until many months had passed. As a result of the rigid discipline exerted in the school, maintained by actions which include even whipping and priestly imprecation, a degree of orderliness, quietness, and attentiveness on the part of the students is achieved which would arouse incredulity among American teachers and parents [171] unless witnessed. Discipline in the school merely reflects that in the home, and a favorite pastime of Irish living in the vicinity of Shannon Airport is to observe the interaction of American parents and their usually obstreperous offspring in the transient room there.

624 [829] Whereas the headmaster attracts the least amount of anti-authority sentiment of any other figure who regulates to a marked degree the lives of the folk, the king attracts the most. The latter is the senior of the two publicans, in age and role, whose home in Low Village accommodates guests as well as the shop and [123] pub. Information concerning him was as difficult to come by as that concerning curates whom I knew, in that he resented my presence and refused to cooperate

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declining steadily, and between 1951 and 1960 there were only nine marriages between folk who remained in the island—and since then but five. 582

The prevalence of celibacy and late marriage is a matter of grave concern to the people. My analysis of these phenomena reveals over 20 contributing factors, of which I will consider only the most important—and these briefly, since most of them will be addressed further within the contexts of the family, personality, and emigration. The one most often voiced by the islanders is the emigration of girls in increasing numbers at younger ages; of the nine girls eligible for marriage, only one is older than 25 years, and several are contemplating emigration. The folk are much less prone to talk of the single estate and late marriage than they are of emigration, which share many of the same causes, and they appear to know fewer of the causes of the former and are less willing to assign relative weights when assessing them. The cause of all three conditions most often cited by both writers and social scientists is the system of inheritance, whereby land cannot be subdivided but is passed on to one son who must wait to marry until his father dies or is willing (or forced) to pass on the land, and his siblings have married or emigrated. By this time, the son is usually middle-aged and cautious in making his choice of a spouse. Most fathers in Inis Beag are loath to surrender their property, and with it control of the family, to sons wishing to marry, and some even will postpone receiving the old age in order to maintain their status position past the age of 70 years. A father who does not choose a successor among several sons until late in his life—which is a common occurrence—can retard their marriages if they choose to "wait it out." Equally loath to disturb the family *status quo* is the mother, who fears not only the loss of her commanding position in the household, but the loss of her son's affection to an incoming daughter-in-law. The man who wishes to marry and is prevented from doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of gossip, and his plight is regarded as a "shame." 582 589 829 [167] 582 589 428 593 [888]

Since late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. That the folk are aware of this cause is attested by their frequent advice to offspring that they postpone marriage to conform to island tradition. This advice invariably is buttressed by a rationale of males not having enough "sense" to marry until they approach the age of 40 years. Reflected in the rationale is the system of male age grading conceptualized in Inis Beag: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until 40 years of age, an adult until 60 years, middle-aged until 80, and old-aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist who comes from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). Another rationale for late marriage often heard in Inis Beag is the impossibility of divorce in Catholic Ireland, which demands that the choice of a spouse be well considered. It appears that this argument is usually used to explain late marriage when other factors are in fact responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades. 582 175 829 [561] [586]

Two closely linked causes of celibacy and late marriage seldom broached in Inis Beag are male solidarity and the unwillingness of many men to accept the responsibilities of marriage, particularly its sexual responsibilities. Marriage is looked on with trepidation, or at least as something less than desirable. The marriageable man in his late twenties and thirties is usually sexually repressed to an unbelieve- 582 589 581 562 [593] [154]

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able degree, has been dominated by parents who have allowed him to take on few major responsibilities, has a mother who acts as a wife surrogate in all but the sexual sphere (at least consciously), has established a routinized existence, and has male companions for whom he feels affection and with whom he shares numerous work and recreational activities. Some men who have been promised or willed land, and who have consenting parents and brides-to-be, will balk at a match because they are "too happy with the lads," and, if persuaded to marry, they will attempt to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage—"The men run with the boys before marriage and carry on the same afterward." Several bachelors and spinsters almost have married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment on each occasion too difficult to make at the last moment.

Before the coming of a permanent priest to Inis Beag, it is asserted that young people contemplating marriage were able to "keep company" frequently and openly before the union was arranged, and that some pairings were "love matches." But since then—with the separation of the sexes from late infancy on, the ubiquity of gossip and opprobrium, and the actions of priests—courting almost has disappeared, and it is not uncommon for a couple awaiting their wedding to have little personal knowledge of one another. Contact on the island between the sexes today is limited to meetings at the few parties which take place, at the occasional summer dances, or *céilí*, held on a large flagging near the school, and sometimes "at the well" or "walking to the cow" during daylight hours. Two generations ago, private Sunday afternoon strolls afforded young men and women the opportunity of coming to know one another well, but these "rambles" about the island are done now only by couples of the same sex—one of the several manifestations of institutionalized friendship. Choice once again seems to be intruding into matchmaking, however, with the increasing demands of acculturated youths for marriage with "love."

Matches are the end product either of secret bargaining between the families involved which can extend for weeks, or of the impetuous act of a man who—goaded by companions or by stout, or both—will visit the home of his "chosen" after dark to negotiate, accompanied by a kinsman or close friend. The bargain, once made, is sealed by the male participants with the emptying of a bottle of whiskey brought by the prospective groom, after which a boy or young man of the household is sent out—often after midnight—to summon relatives and acquaintances for a night long party, known as the *cleambnas* (the word for matchmaking in Gaelic). Sometimes this party is followed by as many as three more on consecutive nights, the expense for which is borne by the family of the bride-to-be. When the bargaining is protracted, it usually is done during the 12 days of Christmas or the final fortnight of Lent, and the match is announced soon after Epiphany or Easter. Hearsay concerning possible matches abounds at these times, but each year "most rumors are dry," unless, of course, "with a lot of drinking and urging a man might decide to take the plunge." It was customary in the past for the wedding to take place four days after the *cleambnas*, but now the service must wait from one to three weeks until the genealogies of the families of the bride and groom are examined by the parish priest to determine their degree of consanguinity.

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Implicit in these statistics are such Irish phenomena as monogamy, the predominance of the nuclear family (Only 10.3 percent are extended in Inis Beag.), family exogamy, patrilocal residence, and a high incidence of celibacy. The last listed bachelor who lives with his widowed sister-in-law, and frequently is visited by a brother's adolescent grandson from the mainland, is regarded by many bachelors as fortunate—"He has a woman and a boy to work and no 'responsibilities.' "

Inheritance in the island is patrilineal, and before a man can marry, his father or widowed mother must "pass on" the property to him. To encourage aged men to surrender ownership of their land, a statute forbids their receiving the old age at 70 years until they have so acted. But despite this law, six Inis Beag elders aged 70 to 79 years—with a total of seven bachelor sons ranging in age from 32 to 47 years (not counting eight others who have emigrated but are eligible to inherit)—still maintain ownership themselves. When a man is without sons, he most commonly wills the land to a brother's son or arranges to have a man wed his daughter and "marry in" to the household. An in-marrying son-in-law, it is interesting to note, may pay a bride wealth, which usually is much larger than the dowry of the girl, for he has no land of his own. Among contemporary landholders, five have obtained property from uncles, six from widowed mothers, and two by marrying in. Other land in Inis Beag has been procured through purchase, exchange, gift-giving, and land dispute verdicts.

A major cause of celibacy, late marriage, disputes, and emigration related to the system of inheritance, seldom mentioned either in writings about Inis Beag or by the islanders, is the common practice of a father playing off his sons against one another for the patrimony in order to achieve favored treatment for his wife and himself in their waning years. Elders are well treated, in part as a result of the above and in part out of the fear that after death their ghosts will punish those who have maltreated them. Often the playing off of sons for the patrimony leads to factionalism within the family and may provoke a secretly favored son to emigrate or, more seriously, all sons acting in concert to depart in anger and disgust. Today, a total of 22 married men, widowers, and widows whose average age is 65.7, hold land that is inheritable by a total of 56 sons whose average age is 30.1 years. (The 16 elders who have a total of 20 sons in the island average 66.7 years of age and their offspring 33.6.) The uncertainty about which sibling will inherit is reflected in these figures: of the 59 present landholders, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and beyond.

Although the Inis Beag family is totally exogamous, the village is only 78.3 percent exogamous (The range for the four villages is from 75 to 83 percent.). Since 1911, six women have married men, mostly farmers, living in communities along the neighboring coast and only one an Inis Thiar islander, while four mainland and five Inis Thiar women have wed men from Inis Beag. During this same 50 year period, six local men have married into contiguous mainland settlements and one into Inis Thiar, but no men from the outside have married into the island. As we have noted already, immigrants for two or three generations are regarded as strangers by the folk, and the same is true of in-marrying wives; these women are treated aloofly and are the victims of much spiteful gossip. Many female siblings marry locally rather than emigrate—one case of four sisters, five of

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three sisters, and ten of two—and they tend to visit together often and lend mutual economic and emotional support.

When a man marries, his parents relinquish the holding, and its direction passes into the hands of the newlyweds. Arensberg and Kimball talk of the "west room" complex, which may exist in many parts of peasant Ireland but does not in Inis Beag. Houses in north and west Co. Clare "with remarkable uniformity" are aligned east and west, and on the son's marriage the old couple moves into the westernmost room "behind the hearth." This room is linked with the Celtic supernatural, for fairy paths are thought to be located along the western side of many houses, and the pagan afterworld—the Isle of the Blest—is a sunken land mass in the nearby western sea (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:134–136). In Inis Beag, on the contrary, over one-third of the domiciles since 1841 have been aligned north and south, fairy trails are found mostly at the back of the island, and a retiring couple may choose any of three rooms (or more in modern homes) to move into. The west room of Co. Clare is called simply "the room" in Inis Beag.

Thirty-four of the 71 inhabited buildings in the island have thatched roofs (see Fig. 8), while the others are antiquated houses which lately have been renovated, mainly by replacing thatch with slate, or are newly built. The last of the traditional "cabins" or "cottages" were constructed in the 1930s, and the first of the modern ones during the 1890s—with two stories initially, and styled and subsidized by the Congested Districts Board. Old and renovated houses are rectangular in shape, are constructed of whitewashed stones with concrete floors, and have a large central kitchen with doors or half-doors to the outside both front and back. "The room" is beyond the kitchen at one end of the building, and two bedrooms (one in the most ancient cabins) are at the other. Lofts for sleeping are in the gable of the roof above "the room" and bedrooms, and are entered by ladder or staircase from the kitchen. Fireplaces share a common wall and chimney between the kitchen and "the room," as they also may between the two bedrooms; but the kitchen hearth is the most used, and in some homes is not permitted to die out.

The space between the cottage and the low stone wall and outbuildings surrounding it is called the "street." Outbuildings at the back include a toilet and various storage sheds—for spuds and turf sods in particular, although the latter often are stacked instead against a gable of the cabin. In a portion of the street or a small field beyond the wall, a garden for vegetables is maintained for easy access. The kitchen doors of the house sometimes open into small halls in the front or back, or both, and when the weather is not too cold or blustery, the door opening to the street on the windward side is kept closed and its opposite open. In the kitchen, which is the center of family activities, are: the fireplace at which cooking is done with pot and cooking ovens hung from an iron hook; the table around which the family eats their five daily meals; the sideboard, known as a "dresser," filled with "delph"—both everyday and "best" china; the religious shrine with "blessed lamp" surrounded by religious pictures and sacred objects; and, occasionally, a "settlebed" which, when closed, serves as a bench during the daytime.

The hearth in the kitchen is indented into the wall to provide two hobs, or seats, and on a chilly or dampish day the folk will nestle inside the fireplace and sit tightly together on a bench drawn up close to the turf fire for warmth. This

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fireplace has a profound psychological significance in Inis Beag and, in a sense, is a force drawing the family together. Now that only three hookers transport peat from the mainland—when in the past there had been more than a hundred—and the price of turf increases considerably year by year, coal or bottled gas stoves are being used by most families. Although coal and gas are cheaper to burn, and coal throws out more heat than turf, the coal fire in the hearth does not foster camaraderie as does the peat fire. The replacement of fireplace by stove and the "stink" and dirtiness of coal are denounced incessantly by the islanders, and the disappearance of the "sweet smell" of burning sods and a multitude of customs associated for generations with the peat fire are lamented.

Many functions are served by "the room." It can accommodate the displaced parents after their son has married, if all agree, for it has a bed which can serve them (as well as distinguished guests, spectators at parties, and now tourists and summer language school students). This chamber is the best kept of the house, with the newest and most valuable of the furniture and often a linoleum floor, and its walls and ceiling are whitewashed or painted frequently. Family heirlooms and objects of sentimental value, which are parted with only as a last resort, are found here. Religious pictures adorn the walls, and on the mantel over the fireplace are photographs of the family going back generations, especially of those who have emigrated or are deceased. When "the stations" are performed every two decades in the cottage, the mass is read in "the room," and certain rubrics used in this ritual are afterward kept here. Finally, the chamber serves as a dance floor when the crowd at a party in the house overflows the bounds of kitchen, hall, and street.

The social universe of the islanders is divided into four segments: close kin or "friends" (Previously, I have used this word in the American sense.), distant kin or "those I have a relationship with," other islanders, and outsiders or strangers. "Friends" normally extend generationally to include ego's parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren, and collaterally to include his affines (spouse's kinsmen), siblings, and first, second, and third cousins—termed, respectively, "four-of-kin," "six-of-kin," and "eight-of-kin."[1] With the intensification of inbreeding, most of the folk are eight-of-kin, and this is why the parish priest examines the genealogies of families at the time of the match. Marriage between first cousins is forbidden, between second cousins demands permission from the bishop, and between third the consent of the parish priest. Distant kin are relatives extended collaterally beyond eight-of-kin, while outsiders include the curates, teachers who are not islanders, lighthouse keepers, the Dane, tourists of local renown, and, as I have just indicated, even in-marrying women and descendants of recently arrived immigrants (also, of course, inquisitive anthropologists).

Although inheritance and succession are patrilineal on the island, descent is bilateral—traced through both agnatic (father's) and uterine (mother's) lines --with a strong agnatic bias.

[1] These positions are pictured horizontally (generationally) and vertically (collaterally) in block form in Arensberg and Kimball 1940:96 in the chapter "Kinship System." The Irish kinship system is common to peoples of Western Europe and America (the Eskimo type), and much of the kinship information reported by Arensberg and Kimball applies to Inis Beag.

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593 —with a strong agnatic bias. Rights and duties are distributed among cognates,
602 but they are less strong among uterine and affinal kin, as well as among relatives of both lines according to distance from ego. Rights and duties include obligations to assist and defend, and mutual assistance in Inis Beag characterizes farming, fishing, housebuilding, unloading turf, carrying the coffin at a funeral, and many other activities. Reciprocation in some form for services rendered is almost an obsession among both kin and non-kin, and not to reciprocate adequately means to lose face. The matter of mutual defense will be considered in later sections and chapters.

551 Only 13 surnames are represented on the island, and there are 27 families bearing a single one, 11 bearing another, and 8 a third. Most Christian names are those of the Blessed Virgin and of saints, especially from the Irish past. Michael, Patrick, Sean (which often is transformed into John, although Eoin is John in Irish), Thomas, Martin, Peter, Coleman, and Joseph—in that order—are the most popular first names for males, while for females it is Mary, Brigid, Margaret, Ann,
[B44] Catherine, Sarah, Nora, and Teresa. In the past, it was customary for Inis Beag
[191] women to bear their offspring at home attended by nurse, midwife, or skilled female relative; but during the past decade, most infants have been delivered in the mainland hospital serving the island, where mothers have learned of "different" surnames and have assigned them to their own children—such as Gerard, Xavier, Christopher, and Pius for boys, and Rita, Carmel, Veronica, and Jude for girls.

601 Each person in the island has a term of reference which never is employed
551 as a term of address.[2] For a man, it is a nickname or his Christian name followed by that of his father: "The General" or Sean Michael. Women ordinarily are not given nicknames; if single, they append their father's first name to their own, and if married, their husband's. An adult man may bear the Christian name of his mother following his own rather than his father's, if, for instance, his mother was widowed early or unduly dominated her husband. Nicknames relate to such things as occupations, abodes, personality idiosyncracies, stature, color of hair, and events of the past; and many are uncomplimentary to the degree of fomenting disputes if uttered at improper times or to inappropriate persons.

155 Before turning to reciprocal relationships which exist between certain
593 agnatic, uterine, and affinal relatives, it is necessary to examine two phenomena which have a vital bearing on kinship and other behavior: the Oedipus complex and male solidarity. Fr. Alexander J. Humphreys says that there is in Ireland a ". . . centripetal mechanism built into the fabric of rural life. This is the strong, preferential love of the rural mother for her sons. She is a magnetic center of the family and her cohesive power is affection. This love, which leads her 'to slave' for her sons and to demand that her daughters do likewise, cushions the sons' hard lot. It mollifies the constant rub of his subordination to his father . . ."

[2] A term of reference is a name used to refer to a person who is not present, while a term of address is a name used to address a person to his face. In America, one might say in referring to his mother, "That woman walking toward us is my mother.", and then greet her as she joins the group, "Hi, Mom."; in this case, mother is a term of reference and Mom a term of address. Often terms of address in the Western world are Christian names, and some terms of reference and address may be identical. Anthropologists usually collect only terms which are used to designate various kin.

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(Humphreys 1965:245). A far more forceful statement is that of Marvin K. Opler and Jerome L. Singer, wherein they address the etiology and consequences of the Oedipus configuration in the Irish family:

> The central figure in Irish families is more likely to be a controlling figure on the distaff side, while fathers, especially in straitened economic circumstances, are frequently by contrast shadowy and evanescent.... An Irish male... beset with anxiety and fear of female figures early in life, and lacking possibilities of firm male identification with a father, would later experience the sexual repressions and socio-religious definitions of marriage and sexuality for which his culture, with its high celibacy rates, protracted engagements, and sin-guilt emphasis, is justly famous.... all this spells a final anxious and fearful lack of positive sexual identification, varying in a continuum from repressed and latent homosexual balances through to added displacements and distortions that are either pallid asexuality or fearful and bizarre misidentifications.... Irish resistance to role identification... was seen as... having the imprint of anxiety in relations with persons of the opposite sex, ordinarily mothers and older sisters.... [The]... basic personality has stamped into it such feelings as male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females, and the kind of latent homosexual feelings which produce a further sense of sin and guilt... (Opler and Singer 1956:15–18).

Complementing the Oedipus complex is male solidarity, which has a long history in Ireland—revealed in legend, historical sources, and modern literature. Psychologists of Freudian bent see male solidarity as one of the many behavioral manifestations of the Oedipus configuration—based on "male inadequacy, the masculine protest, hostility toward females," and "latent homosexual feelings;" but many anthropologists (especially functionalists) analyze it as a sociocultural phenomenon, for it is found in societies where the Oedipus complex appears not to exist. Elizabeth Coxhead, in discussing Lady Gregory's play, *Grania* (completed in 1912), alludes to the "tragic plight" of many Irish women, past and present:

> *Grania* is... a play in which a woman is ousted from an emotional relationship between two men. The "love" is that of man for man, of brother for brother; it is loyalty to the warrior band, and a corresponding resentment of the woman who takes away the warrior's freedom, makes trouble with his comrades, distracts him from his purpose in life. It is an attitude which filters through the play as light filters through crystal; which runs through the heroic Irish sagas... Its continuing validity was borne out by all Lady Gregory had observed in the world around her, the world of the "loveless Irishman," the peasant society which relegated women to serfdom, the middle-class intellectual society which left them only donkey-work.... it is not Finn alone who robs Grania of Diarmuid. "His desire was all the time with you yourself, and Almhuin." Almhuin, the charmed circle of hunters and warriors; its modern equivalent was the masculine society of clubs and bars, of wit and talk and stimulus, from which a woman... would be forever excluded... such a view of the Irishwoman's role, of her relegation to insignificance and her resentment under it, is not exclusively feminine. It is abundantly confirmed by Synge. His heroines... are creatures caged and raging, given no scope for their powers, condemned to love men who are poor things beside them and do not really care for them at all... A woman has only to put her nose into a saloon bar... to realize that Almhuin is with us still (Coxhead 1961:145–146).

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581 Marriage figures prominently as a provision of economic welfare in folk societies throughout the world, and this is illustrated in Inis Beag by two statements made to me by middle-aged, married men: one said that marriage is a matter of "making a good living," and the other that the attributes of an ideal wife are, "She keeps the fire going, has the tea ready, and listens to a man's troubles." Performing economic tasks, satisfying sexual needs, and rearing children are the *raison d'etre* for women according to most island men, but this does not mean 581 that affection between spouses is lacking. The relationship between most mates, • 593 however, is one of "accommodation," and the affection, if present, lacks depth. It is said that "husbands and wives never walk together;" but my wife and I have observed two couples who often fail to observe this dictum, between whom conjugal love as defined in the Western tradition appears to exist. Intimate communication between mates is rare, as it is between most folk—including even mothers and sons and those who are allied through institutionalized friendship. [578] Several disputing husbands and wives have not spoken to one another, except formally, for many years. In the case of disputes of this sort—as well as those involving other kin in the household—the parties involved limit as much as possible both contact and cooperation between themselves rather than resort to abusive [154] argument. Physical assault is unusual, but that the repressed wish to perpetrate violence may be widespread is attested by the delirious response of the islanders to the plot of John M. Synge's play, *The Playboy of the Western World*, when related to them; in it peasants of Co. Mayo laud the youthful "playboy, Christy" for apparently "slaying his da" (father) with a "loy" (spade). The act which so horrified viewers of nativistic persuasion in Dublin and Boston half a century ago arouses the opposite effect among the folk.

593 Women commonly express jealousy of and resentment against not only 461 what they consider the less time consuming and stressful work load of men, but 152 also the greater freedom enjoyed by their husbands. Many times women confided [642] to my wife that they are greatly distressed at being forced to remain home minding their children and performing tedious household chores, while their spouses range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits and are involved 829 in numerous social activities forbidden by custom to women. Some of these same 593 women expressed deep concern over being compelled by the unauthorized decree 562 of local curates, as well as by the sexual demands of their mates, to produce as [858] many offspring as possible; they complained that the constant bearing and rearing of children increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty 461 of their families. Few men whom we questioned were aware—or were willing to 562 admit—that such sentiments are held by their wives, but most men cited as one of the more attractive aspects of local life their being bossed by no one and being able to shift from one job to another among a wide variety to avoid boredom. Men are away from their homes much of the time, day and night, and they do far more "social" walking about the island, visiting relatives and acquaintances, and going to Inis Thiar and the mainland than do their spouses. Also, they frequent the pubs and attend the summer *céilí* on the common land, which married women do not.

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Despite sexual repression and the complaints of wives about large families, children are much desired by parents, and the fertility rate in Inis Beag is extremely high. An examination of 109 marriages between 1891 and 1960 reveals that the average number of offspring per couple is 6.4 (7.2 for marriages in which the wife has passed the menopause); this figure excludes spouses who are barren. The range in family size is between 1 and 16 offspring, and 18 of the 109 marriages have produced 7 children—the modal unit. Today, 6 couples are childless and as a result are "pitied" by their neighbors, who hold that it is the females who are sterile. At least 2 women, to my wife's knowledge, have been examined by obstetricians on the mainland and been found fecund; but they have been unable to persuade their spouses of the medical fact or get them to consult the doctors themselves. Men are anxious about their own maleness, as evidenced in the ability to produce offspring in this case, and have an eye to aid in their labors and to descent, succession, and inheritance. Women desire children, in part, to compensate for the lack of attention and affection from their mates.

Most of the enculturation during infancy and childhood in Inis Beag is done by mothers, as men are away much of the time and, if at home, "don't like to mind the kids." Mothers favor their sons, whom they "overprotect" and to whom they give "seductive" care. In the process of childrearing, sexual interest is first elicited and then blocked by punishing its behavioral manifestations. As a result of the mother's close ties to the male child, the father often is alienated from familial interaction, is hostile toward the youth, and fails to become a source of firm masculine attachment. Disliking to fulfill the responsibilities of enculturation and often in conflict with both his wife and male offspring, the father forces his mate to project herself into her role as childrearer to gain solace, and thus the cycle repeats itself. Although fathers tend to favor their daughters, their desire to "escape" the home discourages a pronounced Electra complex from arising. The bond between mother and son is so binding that it is not infrequent for marriage to be postponed after the death of the father, and the son to work the holding for his widowed mother until he has reached the age of confirmed bachelorhood. "This is also the basis for the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law that is quite intense in Ireland, the prospect of which leads so many sons to refuse 'to bring another woman in on my mother' " (Humphreys 1965:246).

Within marriage, husbands tend to relate themselves to their wives as they have to their mothers when single. The wife is the "strong" person in the household, on whom the husband is emotionally dependent even when their relationship is one of mutual withdrawal and uncooperativeness. In most households, the wife shares at least equally in decision-making, and in many the husband bows to his spouse's decisions, not only in minor matters but in affairs of utmost importance to the family and those relating to activities normally within the male sphere, such as farming. It is the wife who invariably handles the money in the household. Freudians would see the influence of the mother image in the realm of sex: the rarity of conjugal love, the lack of sexual foreplay marked by little or no concern with the female breast, the brevity of the coital act and the frequent spurning of the woman following it, the need to degrade the female in the sexual act, and the

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belief that the "good" women does not enjoy sex and, conversely, that the sexually responsive woman is by virtue of the fact "evil."[3]

As might be expected, there is much sibling rivalry in the island. Between brothers, the major factors responsible are competition for the affection of the mother and for the patrimony; the latter condition adds fuel to the fire of disputes between many sons and their fathers. Competition for the mother's affection is also an important cause of rivalry between brothers and sisters, particularly when the love of the mother for her sons leads her "to slave" for them and "to demand that her daughters do likewise." But the early separation of the sexes and inculcation of male solidarity contribute as well to this antagonism. In some families, affectional ties between children and their grandparents—both agnatic and uterine—are closer than other kinship bonds, with the exception of that between mothers and sons. The grandmother in the extended family plays a considerable role in childrearing, even when the relationship between herself and her daughter-in-law is strained, which is usual; and children often visit the home of their mother's parents, where they are treated indulgently.

The displaced parents in the joint family draw into the background reluctantly and with considerable difficulty. Writing of the folk of Co. Clare, Arensberg and Kimball say:

> Where the transition goes smoothly, father and son continue to work the farm together, but more often as the father grows older he retires to his seat by the hearth. . . . The coming-in of the daughter-in-law is sometimes not so harmonious. Disputes arise. . . In such cases, the mediations of the parish priest and public opinion generally patch up a compromise, but, as far as the authors have observed, the transition is a gradual and successful one. The young woman usually serves a sort of apprenticeship at the hands of the mother-in-law . . . and at least during the young woman's childbearing years the older one maintains her control (Arensberg and Kimball 1940:123–124).

The transition is far less smooth in the island; fathers work less with their sons and retire sooner to the hearth (and the bed); and the apprenticeship of the in-marrying woman seldom extends beyond the birth of her first child. Disputes between grandparents and parents in the extended family of Inis Beag appear to be more numerous than in Co. Clare.

Disputes

Disputes between kin and non-kin in Irish communities have been studied seldom until very recently. In reading what writers and social scientists have written about peasant Ireland in general, and Inis Beag in particular, one often is led to the conclusion that disputes are rare or altogether lacking. Nativism and primitivism have caused many observers to present this distorted picture of social

[3] I must stress the provisional nature of these data on sex, and those to follow on p. 110, for they are based on a limited sample of men and women respondents and relate to the cultural area of most circumspection.

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boys and young men (attempts to hold their hands or kiss them, while under the influence of stout). Over a dozen efforts on the part of my wife and me to determine the truth behind the most pernicious rumors of this genre revealed sexual phantasy at their core in every case.

Church influence also is exerted through missions which come to Inis Beag every three to five years. On these momentous occasions, two Redemptorist priests (usually, but also Franciscans, Dominicans, and Passionists) spend a week in the island, where they conduct mass each morning and preach long sermons in the chapel every afternoon or early evening. Everyone—even old people and mothers with newborn infants—is urged to attend to receive the "blessings of the mission;" to some this means gaining time out of Purgatory for themselves or a deceased kinsman, while to others absence carries with it the penalty of damnation. A mission usually has a theme whose variations are explored with high emotion and eloquence by the visiting priests in their exhortations. The most common theme is "controlling one's passions," but abstaining from intoxicating drink and maintaining the faith as an emigrant also are addressed. Collections are made by children to support the endeavor, and a list of contributors and their donations is displayed publicly. It is said that a mission creates an emotionally charged atmosphere in the island which continues for weeks after the departure of the clerics.

The seeds of repression are planted early in infancy by parents through instruction supplemented by rewards and punishments, conscious imitation, and unconscious internalization. Although mothers bestow considerable attention and affection on their offspring, particularly on their sons, physical love as manifested in intimate fondling and kissing is rare in Inis Beag. Verbal affection comes to supplant contact affection by the time that the child can walk. Any forms of direct or indirect sexual expression—masturbation, mutual exploration of bodies, use of either standard or slang words relating to sex, and open urination and defecation —are punished severely by word and deed. Care is taken to cover the bodies of infants in the presence of their siblings and outsiders, and sex never is discussed before children of any age. Separation of the sexes starts within the family among siblings in early childhood, and is augmented by separation in almost all segments of adolescent and adult activity. Brothers come to associate mostly with brothers, and sisters with sisters, at play in and near the cottage, traveling to and from school, and in the chapel. Boys and girls are separated to some extent in classrooms and completely in play at recess. During church services, there is a further separation of adult men and women, as well as boys and girls, and each of the four groups leaves the chapel in its turn. Even on the strand during summer months, male tourists and vacationing emigrants tend to bathe at one end and women at the other; some swimmers change into bathing suits there, under towels and dresses "daringly"—a custom practiced elsewhere in Ireland which bespeaks of sexual catharsis.

Parents and their school age offspring read the popular religious journals found in most homes, and many of the articles therein deal with sexual morality of the Irish Catholic variety. Several times my wife inadvertently inquired as to whether or not certain women were pregnant, using that word before children, only to be "hushed" or to have the conversations postponed until the young people could

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set deals with the place of origin and the religion of men and women whom islanders marry outside of Ireland, and the other concerns the frequency of marriage among those who have left the country.

Emigrants from Inis Beag have settled, for the most part, in Irish ethnic communities—near relatives—in large cities and their environs of the United States, England, Australia, and Canada. In the United States, these are greater Boston, Hartford, greater New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, and Oakland. The majority of them have had their transportation overseas paid for by relatives who emigrated before them and in whose communities they have made their new homes, and the first order of business for the newcomers is to repay the loans made to them for the journey. Of the first generation arrivals, 37.4 percent of them did not marry; of the remainder, 10.7 percent married fellow Inis Beag emigrants, 14.3 percent persons from Inis Thiar and other nearby islands, 40 percent Irish from the mainland, 8.9 percent Irish-Americans of the second generation and beyond, and 9.5 percent non-Irish. The unknown category is 16.6 percent and includes emigrants who no longer are in contact with their families in Inis Beag or who have married Protestants. As to the former, it is common for men to sever relations with their kinsmen at home when their mothers die, and even some daughters do so after they have been abroad a few years, especially those who have married non-Catholics or "foreigners." This reflects the Oedipus complex and religious and ethnic biases in the Inis Beag family, and runs counter to the assumption of nativists, primitivists, and functionalists who stress the strength of family ties in Ireland. The folk claim that no emigrant in human memory has married a Protestant, but I learned from islanders who had settled for many years in American communities of at least six who had done so.

Not only are the folk secretive about those of their number who have married Protestants after emigrating, but also about emigrants who have "lost the faith." By and large, these are young people who have emigrated to England since 1946; it seems that youthful emigrants before that time remained loyal Catholics, as have those who have gone to the United States recently. The widespread disaffection of Irish Catholics in Britain frequently is discussed in Inis Beag, and is blamed on the anonymity and "temptations" provided by the city. The "priest and gossip keep us faithful here" were the words of a man concerned about the rumored disaffection of his son in London.

During my last visit to Inis Beag in 1965, I discussed with over a dozen islanders some of the statistics that I had compiled previously and have reported herein. Without telling them the results of my analysis, I asked them whether more folk remained single in Inis Beag or abroad, and without exception they made the first choice. Their collective opinion is summed up by the remark of one that, "Here the old people interfere. They don't want to give up the land, and they don't want a new girl to come in. In America, the kids make up their own minds." Social scientists long have assumed that when emigrants from Ireland settle elsewhere, they soon come to marry as early and frequently as the people among whom they live, mostly because of changing economic conditions. But a single rate of 37.4 percent abroad, as compared to 28.6 percent in Inis Beag, belies both common and scientific sense. Certainly factors more important than economic ones

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[For information pertaining to emigration and its relation to sexual repression, late marriage, celibacy, and family relations in Ireland, see 17: Messenger, ER6 Rural Irish, category 116, pp. 32-36.]

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human relationships are few. There is, in fact, little difference in the style of life between the most and the least prosperous of the islanders. The web of kinship rather than the possession of status attributes, for the most part, determines who will interact with whom and in what manner. Land and money are the principal symbols, with formal education and influential relatives (particularly priests, nuns, and teachers), on the mainland and abroad, becoming more important. Two generations ago, strength, courage, economic skills, and musical and storytelling abilities were highly regarded as well, but acculturation has lessened their significance.

Although there are fifty-nine nuclear families, only thirteen surnames exist today. There is much inbreeding, as might be expected, and the church carefully checks the genealogies of prospective spouses to ascertain their degree of consanguinity. Courtship is almost nonexistent, and most marriages are arranged with little concern for the desires of the young people involved. Late marriage and celibacy are as prevalent in Inis Beag as elsewhere in Ireland. The average marriage age for men is thirty-six and for women twenty-five, and 29 percent of those persons eligible for marriage are single.[3] The functions of the family are mainly economic and reproductive, and conjugal love is extremely rare. A sharp dichotomy exists between the sexes; both before and after marriage men interact mostly with men and women with women. The average family has seven offspring, and many women are unhappy about being forced by the unauthorized decree of local priests to produce as many children as possible. They feel that the constant bearing and rearing of offspring increase their work, restrict their freedom, and perpetuate the poverty of their families. Jealousy of the greater freedom of men is commonly expressed by women who have many young children. Mothers bestow a considerable amount of attention and affection on their offspring, especially on their sons. However, tensions between fathers and sons which develop in childhood often flare into scarcely repressed hostility

[3] Twenty-nine percent of those islanders of marriageable age are single. This rises to a high of 37 percent among first and second generation Inis Beag emigrants, indicating the actions of more than just economic causes. Irish scholars, for obvious reasons, tend to stress economic and other (climate, race, English oppression, the famine, loss of the Irish tongue, etc.) monistic causes in their analyses of culture and personality phenomena. Inadequate statistics for second and third generation migrants from Inis Beag suggest that the celibacy rate lowers markedly only when descendants of immigrants dissociate themselves from Irish ethnic communities and Irish-American priests. Ethnographic research is sorely needed among Irish of several generations in the countries to which they have migrated to probe this and other phenomena.

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later on, particularly in those families where competition for the inheritance of property is engendered among siblings by the fathers' attempts to ensure favored treatment in old age.

Men are far more active socially than are women. The latter are restricted by custom mostly to visiting, attending parties during the winter, and participating in church-associated activities. Many women leave their cottages only to attend mass, wakes, and funerals or to make infrequent calls on relatives; my wife and I talked with some elderly women who had not visited other villages or walked to the back of the island for thirty or more years. Men not only attend parties with their womenfolk but go to dances during the summer, frequent the pubs, play cards almost nightly during November and December (the period when once people congregated to hear storytellers), visit the homes of kin and friends or meet along the trails at night, and range the entire island and the sea about it in their economic pursuits. Before the age of benevolent government, women shared many economic tasks with men, such as collecting seaweed, baiting lines, and gutting fish. But now they tend to household chores and only milk cows and perform some of the lighter farming jobs with their fathers and husbands.

The island folk are devout Catholics, despite the fact that they are critical of their priests and hold pagan religious beliefs. Youth of Inis Beag overtly disallow the existence of other than church-approved supernatural entities. However, their elders cling to traditional pagan beliefs and practices (many of which are Druidic in origin) about which they are extremely secretive for fear of being ridiculed by outsiders and their more skeptical neighbors. The non-Christian array of spiritual beings includes various spirits and demons, ghosts, witches, phantom ships, and animals and material objects possessing human attributes and volitions. Prominent among the spirits thought to inhabit Inis Beag are the trooping and solitary fairies, sea creatures, mermaids, and the banshee. The most formidable of the demons is a pooka which lives in a Bronze Age burial mound and roams the strand and common land at night altering its shape and size at will; during the day it will twist the limbs of unwary persons who choose the hill for a resting place. Ghosts, called "shades," are frequently seen after dark performing economic tasks. They are thought to be doing penance in purgatory, which embraces the earth as well as a spiritual locus; this is one example of the many reinterpretations of Christian and pagan belief effected by the islanders. The only form of witchcraft practiced today is the casting of the evil eye. At least three persons, suitably ostracized, are believed to be able to perpetrate evil

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114 troversial novels use the Oedipus complex as a focus. *Michael Joe,* by
155 William Murray, examines the role of the emasculating Irish mother, and John McGahern, in *The Dark,* probes the conflict between father and son so characteristic of Irish society.

114 One of the most penetrating studies of this sociocultural configuration, which has such momentous psychological consequences, is that of Marvin Opler and Jerome Singer, conducted among first, second, and third generation Irish male schizophrenic patients in New York hospitals. The intent of these social scientists was to determine how psychotic syndromes are culturally patterned. For a year they observed their respondents to obtain total psychiatric, anthropological, and psychological profiles. Their observations included ward scrutiny, interviews, the collection of life histories and case histories, and the administration of thirteen tests, among them the Rorschach, Thematic Apperception, Sentence Completion, and Porteus Maze. The investigators conclude that there is a continuity of Irish (and Italian) culture and personality forms among immigrants for at least three generations; their psychological findings are buttressed by research data collected in Irish and English mental institutions. My wife and I visited one of these hospitals and
[12] interviewed several Irish psychiatrists both there and in America. Our own conclusions support many of those reported by Opler, Singer, and
* 831 the psychiatrists interviewed.[6] Opler and Singer have the following to
15 say about the Oedipus complex in Ireland:
• [593]

> Normative cultural standards led to the hypothesis that the central female figure in the Irish family, the mother, could instil primary anxiety and fear toward female figures. . . . This hypothesis grew out of anthropological observations that the central figure in Irish families is more likely to be a controlling figure on the distaff side, while fathers, especially in straitened economic circumstances, are frequently by contrast shadowy and evanescent.
> [58] . . . An Irish male patient beset with anxiety and fear of female figures
> [838] early in life, and lacking possibilities of firm male identification with a father, would later experience the sexual repressions and socio-religious definitions of marriage and sexuality for which his culture, with its high celibacy rates, protracted engagements, and sin-guilt emphases, is justly famous. . . . all this spells a final anxious and fearful lack of positive sexual

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[815] [6] Irish psychiatrists in that country, England, and America are often reticent about discussing sex. Psychiatric theory in Ireland is modified by Catholic dogma,
[799] and specialists are influenced in writings, therapy, and discussions by subtle religious and political forces, as well as by their own character structure shaped by the Irish milieu. One psychologist, well acquainted with psychiatry in Ireland, dubbed much of it "Freud with clothes on."

17: Messenger E-4,5 (1958-1966)1971 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

I have already touched tangentially on some of the historical and broad cultural implications of sexual puritanism, in Ireland as well as Inis Beag. In this final section, I will examine the perennially addressed phenomena of late marriage, celibacy, and emigration, in their island setting, with special reference to the factor of sexual repression.

In a population of 350, 116 persons are married, 13 are widows, 3 are widowers, and 33 males over twenty-three years of age and 21 females over seventeen are single. Since marriage occurs between twenty-four and forty-five for men and eighteen and thirty-two for women, on the basis of past statistics, only 18 men and 9 women are eligible for marriage. As mentioned earlier, the average marriage age for males is thirty-six and for females twenty-five. My wife and I isolated almost two dozen interrelated causes of late marriage and the prevalence of bachelor and spinsterhood. The most emphasized cause in Ireland is the pattern of inheritance: one son, usually the eldest, must wait until the father is ready to pass on his patrimony and his own siblings have married or emigrated. In an attempt to alleviate the situation somewhat, a law today requires that to receive the "old-age" (pension) a man at seventy must will his property to a son, or other appropriate person. This cause is important in Inis Beag, although primogeniture is not so well defined (of those sons inheriting property, 47 percent are first born, 42 percent second, 8 percent third, and 3 percent fourth and later). Inis Beag fathers are loath to surrender their land and control of the household to their sons and will often play off the sons, one against another, in order to achieve favored treatment for their wives and themselves in their waning years. Occasionally this procedure "backfires": the sons, acting in concert, emigrate together, and an increasing amount of land lies idle because of this.

Equally loath to disturb the family status quo, island mothers will often resist incoming daughters-in-law, who threaten not only their commanding position but the loss of their sons' affection. Mothers whom we have interviewed in Inis Beag and elsewhere in Ireland display the extreme of Oedipal attachment when they rejoice in their sons' decision

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589 to join the priesthood; not only are spiritual blessings and prestige brought
• 593 to the family as a result, but their sons are at last removed from potential
[155] wives. Yet the Inis Beag man who wants to marry and is prevented from
[793] doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of much gossip. Outwardly, at least, his plight is considered a "shame."

* 831 To the man in his late twenties and thirties who is secure in his
581 home and has established regularized patterns of conduct (and has a
589 mother who acts in most ways as a wife surrogate), the general responsi-
567 bilities of marriage, and specifically its sexual responsibility, are factors
[593] militating against his seeking a spouse. Some men who have land, the consent of their parents, and willing "sweethearts" will balk at a match because they are too happy "running with the lads," and if persuaded to marry, they will try to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage. It was hinted to my wife and me on several occasions that particular island celibates almost married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment too difficult to make at the last moment.

162 Three other causes of late marriage and the single estate in Inis Beag
167 must be mentioned. Girls are more dissatisfied with their future lot than
582 are boys and men and are emigrating at ever younger ages, thus sharply
589 reducing the number of eligible females. During the 1950–1959 period, the average age at which girls emigrate dropped below twenty-one years.
[871] Each year more of them attend schools on the mainland and thus are
[484] more exposed to stimuli which promote emigration. Mothers are puzzled
[178] at the increasing exodus of their daughters, since women today have a far easier time than they did a generation or two ago; but some are glad
182 to see them escape the drudgery and boredom of island existence. Since
582 late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. We heard Inis Beag adults assert that marriage should be postponed to conform to island mores; this usually was buttressed by
829 a rationale of males not having "enough sense" to marry until they are
[561] nearly forty years of age. Reflected in this rationale is the male age-grading conceptualized by the folk: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until forty, an adult until sixty, middle-aged until eighty, and aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist approaching forty who comes
582 from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). A final cause, often
[586] articulated by the islanders, is the fact that divorce is impossible in Ireland, therefore the choice of a spouse must be well considered. It